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ABSTRACT

The series of three lectures examine different aspects of work as manifested in changes in workers' attitudes, responses to these changes in the European context, and significant European developments in relation to worker participation. The first lecture discusses social, technological, educational, and economic changes that have affected attitudes toward work, particularly in industrial societies, and which have brought about changes in the organizational relationship between management and workers. The second lecture examines changes in the work task, as a part of the changes occurring in advanced industrial societies in relation to work. The discussion centers on the European context to illustrate changes in the approach to work, drawing more on the workers' creativity and control of the job, and touching on different ideas that have influenced this change. The third lecture examines two other changes in relation to work: the condition under which work is carried out, and the nature of the authority structure. A decrease in time spent on work and flexibility of working time are two working conditions that have changed with industrialization. Increased participation in management is also evidenced by collective bargaining, trade unions, worker representation, and work councils. A bibliography is included. (Author/EC)

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THE WORKER AND WORK:

CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES

Three Lectures

by

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University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin, 53706

April, 1974

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Oliver Clarke

April, 1974

These lectures were presented by Mr. Clarke at the Wisconsin Center under the sponsorship of the Department of Rural Sociology-Extension, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

At the time of these lectures Mr. Clarke was Visiting Professor in the Institute of Industrial Relations, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Mr. Clarke is Principal Administrator in the Social Affairs and Industrial Relations Division, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris, France. The opinions expressed are Mr. Clarke's own and should not be regarded as being necessarily those of the O.E.C.D.

January, 1975

THE WORKER AND WORK:

CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES

Lecture 1

In this series I propose first to examine changes in workers' attitudes, possible reasons for them, and changes in work itself. Necessarily, to cover so much ground in such a short time the presentation will be somewhat superficial. In the second talk I want principally to review the responses made to the apparent changes. I shall talk particularly about European experience, both as to the conditions under which work is carried out and such things as job enrichment, autonomous work groups, and other aspects of working conditions, such as European ideas of "Flexitime." In the third lecture I shall talk mainly about significant European developments in relation to worker participation. The participation debate and action as they have developed in Europe make the United States look an extremely conservative country indeed. Participation as understood in Europe is a somewhat alien concept to American usage, and it's going to be fruitful to speculate why that should be so. And I shall want to explain why Europe is developing the idea of participation as a means of adjusting industry so as to suit the needs of the future work force, which is what this amounts to.

Also in the third lecture, I shall try to make an assessment of the problems we have discussed and speculate on what lies ahead both nationally and internationally for employers, for unions, and for governments. We shall also be touching on technological, organizational, social, and some educational changes.

Let us spend a minute going over some of the earlier concepts that mankind had of work. For the Hebrews, work was the curse of Adam; it was because of

Adam's misdeeds that work became necessary, and man has been working ever since. The Greeks built their civilization on the assumption that work was something that as far as possible should be done by slaves. That's a slightly unfair picture of Greek society, but certainly work was not very highly thought of by the great philosophers whose thinking has been so influential in the development of our culture. As to the slaves, we don't know their view about work; none of them wrote textbooks to tell us about their experiences; the books were written by the free minority in the cities.

The early Christians didn't have a particularly happy idea of work. Work was certainly not as good in their eyes as contemplation of God, but work was necessary, and as St. Paul said, "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." It was the Reformation, however, which really brought about the concept of work in which most of us have been reared. For Martin Luther work was a way, and in some respects one of the best ways, of serving God. It was the base of the Protestant Ethic made famous by Max Weber, and it was strengthened if anything by the later additions of Calvinism, which added to the significance of work. Work was God's work and success in work showed that one's activities were pleasing to God. God rewarded the hard worker.

Nearer our own time, from the practical down-to-earth point of view, work has had other significance. I'm talking now predominantly about the 19th Century and the first half of the present century in societies like the United States. First of all, work was something that we had to do to keep alive. Secondly, it was something we had to do if we wanted to get ahead, at least to "keep up with the Joneses." American society particularly was rich in stories of rags to riches, the young poor man who made good, and the notion that hard work always or nearly always paid off. But there was a third reason for the significance of work: one worked so that one should not be a drag on society. It was morally wrong to be a drag on society. More recently we have added to those still not

dead concepts the idea that from work we can get what Abraham Maslow called self-actualization--what has otherwise been called self-fulfillment--that we will be rewarded by work in personal development.

Changing Attitudes to Work

In recent years, we've experienced some attack on the traditional values; particularly the attack has come from the counter-culture, a complex of notions almost by definition not shared by everybody. It's a minority view, but it's significant and I think we can learn from it if only because in some ways it shocks our sense of propriety (those of us who have accepted the conventional wisdom) in a way which makes us challenge some of our traditional basic assumptions. What are the assumptions of the counter-culture? Work for profit is at least in part commonly exploitation. Much of work is inhuman; much of work is degrading and so, often, are the conditions under which work is done. The consumption society which makes us work is a fraud. It's an insult to human dignity and to human needs. Man should quit the rat race; affluence isn't by any means everything. And for the young--well, don't let your parents bully you into old-fashioned ideas of getting ahead.

Corresponding to this set of beliefs is the idea that since we live in a technologically advanced society, we can afford to take it easy. Why should we work in an inhuman way when we could still survive reasonably comfortably without the puritan ethic?

In short, both the purpose of work and the operation of industry are questioned by this framework of ideas. At its extreme the challenge posed is, "Do we want to move work from being a major life interest as it has always been, or do we want to opt for poorer societies with little or no growth, even possibly negative growth, to be able to live happier and healthier lives?" But this doesn't represent the main stream of thought. The main stream remains to a large extent

as I've outlined it in traditional form. However, many of its bases are getting weaker and there's a lot more questioning today of its underlying values. Both the urge to get rich and the idea of working for profit seem to be getting less strong. We're not so prepared as workers ourselves to accept the work discipline which has in the past made for economic growth. Indeed it has been a main factor in economic progress.

It's necessary to comment that the approach I have just made to this subject is one that is found almost solely in the advanced industrial countries--in the affluent countries. You don't find it very often in industrializing countries where workers tend mostly to be concerned first of all with surviving--with scratching a living and holding down a job--before they have the luxury of some of the thoughts that I have outlined. You don't find much evidence of it in communist societies either.

Now, given that framework of ideas, what about the factors that have been affecting work? Primarily, of course, we must mention the technological factor. A great deal of drudgery, thank God, has been taken out of work by machines. We've had old style mechanization, we've had automation, we've had computers. Of course clerical work can be drudgery as well as manual work. Incidentally, had we been discussing work 15 years ago, we would probably have been taking a very different line on automation from the one that we might take now. Automation, some people seemed to be saying at the time, was going to do everything for us. I think that was always an absurdity. Blauner later estimated that at the most only eight percent of the volume of traditional jobs could be automated anyway. Nonetheless, we have to bear in mind that automation is one of the factors which has been dictating changes in our occupational structure.

Occupational Change

Secondly, as a result of technological change, some say (its the sort of thing which isn't very susceptible to proof) that work has become more repetitive

and subdivided. Others say that work has become, conversely, more demanding, that it requires more skill, that workers have to know a great deal more than they did to do that work. Be that as it may, we certainly have a lot of occupational change. With more efficient production, with greater affluence, and with changing patterns of wants, occupations are increasing, decreasing, dying, being born, at a pace never before known. Most of today's occupations didn't exist a century ago. I believe the Department of Labor has a vast compendium of occupational titles. Just check through that and see how many of them existed in the 1870's. And we've got the well-known move in the labor force from manufacturing to service and the move to more white-collar workers from blue-collar workers and, ever-increasing, the increase in employment by federal and state government--all of which change the face of the labor market.

We have an increasing proportion of managerial and technical workers compared with manual workers; we've been moving in concept from needing the <u>able</u> worker--from regarding the best worker as the man who brings a lot of ability to his job--to the man who is a <u>responsible</u> worker (a somewhat different concept)--the man who can take a lot of responsibility. That, of course, is not true of all fields. I had in mind particularly the highly capital-intensive industries, process production, and that kind of thing.

Our ideas of the craftsman have been changing. No longer does the village blacksmith shoe your horse, if you've got a horse; no longer does every craftsman pass through seven, six, or five year apprenticeships. Indeed, the idea of craft skills, once acquired and unchanged until retirement, has become less important in recent years in traditional European societies as well as in the United States. And we know that the shape of the labor market has also been changed by the much greater female participation rate and by the changing age structure of the working population.

Educational Change

And what about the educational changes? Certainly in all our present industrial societies our labor force is very much better educated than it was 50 and 100 years ago--in the United States quite exceptionally so. We're now entering the rather important and debatable argument about whether we haven't, as far as jobs are concerned, reached a stage of having great difficulty in finding worthwhile jobs which will match people's education. We're getting a mismatch between education and work. That, of course, is partly to ignore the true purpose of education, which is certainly not to be considered as a simply vocational experience.

Economic and Organizational Changes

Apart from all these technological and occupational changes, we've been going through a series of economic and organizational changes. All of these changes are interconnected; it's difficult to identify one from another clearly. But we've had the information-processing revolution, we've had an increase in the size of firms, and greater remoteness of decision-making. This has a great deal of importance for labor-management relations, nowhere more so than in the case of the multinational company where a decision made in Cologne or Coventry isn't always really a decision made in Cologne or Coventry but may be a decision made in, say, Minneapolis. The local trade unions know it very well, and they don't like it because they don't meet the man from Minneapolis, and that makes for industrial relations disturbance, to say the least.

And then we have been attaining greater capital intensitivity, and in turn that has rendered management increasingly vulnerable to industrial action. It's one thing to stop a labor-intensive company; it's another to stop a plant which has millions of dollars worth of plant and equipment, all of which lies idle at enormous expense if there is a strike.

The "New" Worker

Well, those are some of the changes taking place in work. What about the worker? The common argument encountered nowadays is that we really have what is virtually a "new" worker. We should also bear in mind that the "new" manager has been exposed to the same kind of factor so that if the worker's outlook has changed, so also may that of the manager. Why should all this be?

We've already referred to the higher standard of education, and it's not only an education that is greater in volume, but it's different in quality. In the 19th Century much of education, particularly for workers, was education by rote. Now, particularly in the last 30 years, the prevailing belief has been that education is a questioning process. We need to question. It's not a new idea. As Xenophon said in one of the Platonic dialogues, "A question then is education." It was a very, very true comment in modern terms.

Secondly, there has been the factor of full employment. You may feel a little cynical about using that expression in this country. Compared with an American figure, which has long been between three and six percent unemployment, "full employment" in much of Europe has tended to mean a fraction of one percent unemployment or at the very most something like two percent; the labor market has been extraordinarily tight in some countries for many years. If there is always another job to go to you can feel more secure. Coupled with that as a factor, I would add the welfare state which in much of Western Europe has provided workers with a kind of safety net. Admittedly this is an argument which does not bite with so much force in the United States. Incidentally, to these two factors I would ascribe some of the differences between the present approach to industrial relations and to work in the United States compared with some European countries. One significance of the welfare state to me is that a man feels that whatever he does, the state is going to provide a safety net for him. If he goes on strike, the state is going to look after his family, as happens in

Britain extensively; if he loses his job, a vast number of retraining arrangements and employment services will come into play. When he retires there will be a pension; when he dies there will be money to help pay for the funeral. All of these add to a man's security and perhaps dispose him to feel that he can challenge where he would not have challenged years ago. Thirdly, our economic growth (steady economic growth in Western Europe particularly) has created expectations of continuous improvement--partly what Daniel Yankelovitch has described as a psychology of entitlement. Years ago we used to say, "It really would be marvellous if society did something to protect me from this, that, or the other hazard." Now we have moved to saying, "Society owes me that it should protect me against this, that, or the other hazard." It's a change in social expectation. This has been particularly notable with respect to security of employment. Security of employment is very much less in the United States than it is in Western Europe. In Western Europe the concept has moved from "I wish the state would do something to help me to get a job" to the feeling in the late 1940's and 1950's that "really the state owes it to me to provide me with a job" to--at it's most extreme as it's been voiced in some recent well-known incidents in Europe--the position today in which some workers are saying "the state owes me to keep me in my job--the job that I'm at the present doing--on the conditions and the terms at which I am doing it." As examples, I would cite the Lip watch factory in Besançon in South-eastern France, Upper Clyde Shipbuilding in Scotland, and the Enka factory in the Netherlands, as three cases where workers occupied the factories to retain their employmnet--not an insignificant angle on work.

Well, we've looked at some organizational changes which have meant in effect a greater distance in industrial relationships, and we have looked at changes which might be taking place in the worker, and clearly these changes are moving in opposite directions. So it is not surprising that one can see, looking into the future, the possibility of continued friction between management and workers, and possibly even increased friction.

I've put forward what is really a hypothesis. What in fact has been happening? What changes have there been in workers? On the one hand on this very controversial point, we have people talking of very radical change and upheaval indeed. This is the well-known idea of the blue-collar blues. We have Hal Sheppard and Neil Herrick in their book Where Have All the Robots Gone? using a phrase like this: "A crisis exists and . . . action far beyond what we have seen is imperative." This is really quite a strong assertion. On the other hand, there are widespread arguments that workers aren't seeing anything wrong with work; what they want is more money and release from what they see as outdated authoritarianism in the work place and insecurity in employment. A well-informed man like John Dunlop has commented, "A good deal of the academic concern on this subject derives from an idealized view of workers' interests." Leonard Woodcock from the UAW has argued that the notion of work boredom sometimes put forward is exaggerated and romanticized. He detects a tendency on the part of academics to look at workers as being subhuman and not really people like themselves except that somehow what the intellectual thinks is good for the worker is good for the worker. This is an interesting concept to talk about in Wisconsin. John R. Commons and Selig Perlman, you will all remember, inveighed heavily against the misleading influence of intellectuals and their attempts to foist their own ideas on workers. Nevertheless, the ideas of the New Left in Europe and many others since Marx have been that the workers still have revolutionary propensity. Most recently, Serge Mallet and Andre Gorz in France have seen technicians as the new saviors of the working class who are going to lead the working class in the trade union movement into a revolution. Well, let us see whether they do.

Indicators of Attitude Changes

How can we really get at the facts behind this idea that workers' attitudes have been changing? One way of doing it is by indicators. We can go first of all

to newspaper reports of isolated incidents. As has been said, the word Lordstown has almost passed into the dictionary. That's one of these special cases. There can be a lot of argument about that particular case. One can find plenty more, but then there always have been special cases. I would almost guarantee to find you some apparently significant development from the New York Times of 1893, or what have you. A test more capable of statistical analysis is the test of labor turnover. If workers are tremendously dissatisfied, then one imagines that they change jobs. Do they? Well, there are Bureau of Labor statistics for quit rates and there's not much evidence there. There are variations in quit rates, but on the whole they can reasonably be ascribed to economic fluctuations. So that's certainly not proof. For Europe the position is a little clearer. Widespread evidence in Europe suggests that, except perhaps for Germany and Austria, there is a rising trend in labor turnover.

If labor turnover is one indicator, absenteeism is still more apparent. Again one has to sort out the difference between the wild stories that are being told and what the cold statistics reveal. The stories speak of five percent absence in midweek, rising to 10 percent on Mondays and Fridays where conditions are disagreeable. There's nothing new about the idea of Monday and Friday absenteeism. In much of Europe and certainly in Britain in the early 19th Century one had the social institution known as St. Monday. It wasn't actually a Saint's day, and therefore a public holiday, but it was a day that one took off; if one could afford to. The reason was shown by a famous instance in World War I in the coal fields in Britain which were being toured by Lloyd George, the great war leader, who asked a miner why he had the habit of taking a day a week off. The miner answered, "Well, you see, I work four days because I can't earn enough to live on in three," which was a very salutary, unpuritan ethic way of looking at the subject of work.

What are the facts about absenteeism? There are figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics which suggest that the average daily rates of unscheduled absence have risen from 3.3 percent in 1967 to 3.6 percent in 1972; not a vast increase, but nonetheless actually close to a 10 percent rise, which is not insignificant, if the statistics may be relied upon. I hasten to add that the Department of Labor does not regard that as conclusive. In an article on absenteeism in the Monthly Labor Review in December, 1973, Janice Hedges commented that for short-term absences--what she called unscheduled personal absences of less than a week--the figures showed quite significantly higher absences in 1972 than 1967, which again supports the idea that there is something to be learned from the movement in absenteeism. But that's not necessarily to do with dissatisfaction at work. It might be simply a function like my coal mine story; you feel well-off enough to live without the extra work, so you take a day off. Also it may be indicative of a generally more relaxed attitude to work discipline.

One interesting statistic about absences is that most industrial countries are experiencing a considerable rise in sickness absence. Does this mean that our societies are getting sicker? I rather doubt it, particularly at a time when medical facilities are better than ever before in most countries. I think again it shows a more relaxed attitude to going to work, and, of course, it also illustrates the spread of sickness payment arrangements. (In some countries you get average earnings when you're away sick if you're a manual worker and that means people can better afford to be away.)

A common indicator of unrest is the strike. In the United States, strike losses are still lower than they commonly were in the late 1940's and early 1950's. I have some figures showing 0.13 percent of estimated work time in 1961 to 1965 moving up, doubling indeed, to 0.26 percent in 1966 to 1971. It would be interesting to correlate these figures with the incidence of inflation. If you have inflation,

or particularly if you have a changing rate of inflation, then you would perhaps find that the greater the rate of inflation the greater the strike incidence. Certainly there's nothing to suggest that the strike movements are wholely ascribable to changes in the attitude of the strikers. It may be, but it's not proven. Internationally, comparisions of strike figures are extremely difficult. In Japan the unit of strike is the union. France didn't publish figures for 1968 because of the high amount of time lost in the events of May that year. All that sort of thing makes life rather difficult for the statistician. In the early 1960's two American scholars, Ross and Hartman, forecast the withering away of the strike. Whatever the limitations of statistical material, we have to accept that that was, unfortunately, an incorrect prognostication because certainly strikes are not withering away. On the whole, the strike outlook is one of expansion. But it can't be said conclusively that the strike records prove any changes in attitude to work.

Another rather debatable indicator is productivity. Such experimental evidence as there is doesn't really prove that productivity has a definite relationship to workers' attitudes, to workers' satisfaction. Even if you are very satisfied at work, it doesn't follow that you're an excellent producer. But we would at least expect to find that if there was a significant general change in workers' attitudes, it would have an effect on productivity increase in advanced industrial societies. Now, for a long time, productivity growth in the United States has been running below the levels common in several European countries. (Of course the American figures started at a much higher level.) But there's no proof that attitudes have had a particularly adverse effect on national productivity.

Yet another indicator is labor force participation. After all, abstention from work itself is the ultimate in rejection of work. But again there's no evidence of a down-trend in participation rates--that is, the proportion of the

population that is at work. Indeed, it has increased from 59.5 percent in 1950, to quote the American figures, to 61.3 percent in 1970. (Those figures by the way conceal a drop for men and a substantial rise for women.) We've heard a lot about dropouts, but certainly those statistics suggest that dropouts couldn't be very widespread.

Lastly, one might expect to find as an indicator of change that new claims are being made by unions on behalf of workers. This is not, however, very susceptible to statistical treatment. What can we make of it? We can produce a lot of statements, but they're not statements which suggest on the whole a great deal of change. We have, for instance, Mr. Winpisinger of the International Association of Machinists in the United States who says that if you want to enrich work, you can, "enrich the pay check. The better the wage, the greater the job satisfaction. There is no better cure for the blue-collar blues." He has a number of other useful prescriptions. You can decrease hours; you can do something about noise, heat, fumes; you can revalue the snobbery in regarding blue-collar workers as inferior to white-collar or managerial workers; you can give workers a greater sense of control over their working conditions, job assignments, and their work schedules; and you can give channels for advancement for special ability.

That's a particularly trenchant expression of a point of view, rather than an indicator of change. But we are seeing a few indicators of change. The United Automobile Workers have expressed a certain amount of interest. There has been Senator Kennedy's Worker Alienation Research and Technical Assistance Bill which has been before Congress twice, and the efforts of the National Commission on Productivity. And there has been the publication of the report "Work in America," by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1973.

European Developments

But some of the most interesting things have been happening in Europe. In Britain there has been the setting up by the government of a special working party to review the quality of working life. France has initiated legislation which will, for example, require an employer to make annual reports to his employees on the steps he has taken to improve working conditions. The enterprise is required to have a subcommittee of the works' council which will keep under constant review the possibility of improving work organization. And in France there's considerable union interest, and indeed public interest, in work reorganization, particularly in the lot of the semi-skilled assembly worker. The workers of Renault, Citroen, and Peugeot have been said to have blue-collar blues, too.

In Germany there have been some signs of interest. The important and powerful metal trade union last year concluded for the engineering industry in southwest Germany a significant new agreement. It provided, amongst other things, that fragmentation of operations should be avoided; that work design should seek job enrichment, and that for assembly work a break of three or five minutes every hour should be provided for the workers.

In Italy the workers and their unions have taken quite a militant stand on work organization and indeed on the purposes of industry itself. Workers have sought to influence the kind of car made by Fiat, for example. Again in Fiat, a national agreement has required the company to set up joint committees with the trade unions to review work organization--to improve the quality of working life. Most recently in that company a national agreement has included provisions about allocation of investment. But all these instances are small compared with the developments in Scandinavia where interest has been over a broad front. I want to talk a lot more about Scandinavia in the remaining two talks, but I would like

to note that in Sweden the issue of worker satisfaction is an extremely important one for the future. We can probably regard Sweden as the world's most socially advanced society as well as the richest advanced nation in terms of gross national product per capita. In this very advanced country government, employers and unions are extremely concerned that in the years to come it will prove very difficult to man industry. Industry is shrinking in terms of proportion of the labor force, and workers' perception is that they go from a society that has been advancing socially for many years to a society within the work gates that has not been advancing at anywhere near the pace. What are the Swedes doing about it? They are considering ways and means of reconstructing industry to meet this new challenge. Since brainwashing workers into again readily accepting traditional forms of industrial work is unthinkable, the only solution is considered to be to change industry to meet the needs of workers who are available.

We ought to look also at the Soviet Union. In a paper given by N.G. Alexandroff and V.I. Ussenin at the World Industrial Relations Congress which I attended a few months ago, they said that they expected to find in the Soviet Union "a further growth of Communist consciousness of the workers by raising their attitudes to work as a matter of honor," which seems to suggest that the Soviet Union has problems of workers' attitudes, too.

We also have evidence in Europe of another kind of worker dissatisfaction. There have been some quite notable cases where some commentators have referred to dissatisfaction with trade union leadership. This is especially to be found where trade union leadership has been particularly centralized. For instance, the iron miners in Kiruna in Lapland (Sweden) had a major strike in 1970 which was quite clearly not in accordance with the policies being followed by the central union organization. The widespread German strike movement of the late summer and autumn of 1969 has been ascribed by some observers to a feeling that the unions were too tame, too bureaucraticized and weren't doing enough to get

a fair share of the goodies for the membership. And indeed it's possible to see those instances as part of the much wider movement internationally, the very interesting movement of 1968-69, which in this country you encountered in the universities, as indeed we did also in Europe, and which in some ways seems to me to be comparable to the political upheavals of 1848.

Even in Europe, I would not like to claim that trade union interest in our subject has been as marked as might be inferred from some of the examples I have given. Rather more interest has been attached to workers' participation, which I will deal with in my third lecture. Interest has also been shown in increased flexibility of employment and flexibility at work generally, which we will talk about next time. Lastly, it has been apparent in an attack which is just starting on management prerogatives. This is an attack against what many workers see as authoritarian action on the part of managers. It takes the form in Sweden, for example, of the trade unions seeking to negotiate change in what has been a bedrock of Swedish employer policy, and that is a stated managerial rights clause applying to each collective agreement. In Britain, where many management prerogatives have often in practice been more restricted than they have in most countries, this move takes the form of unions seeking quite straightforwardly that no decision on the part of management to which workers object should be proceeded with. That is to say, any change the management wants to make must have agreement by the workers before it is made.

Attitude Surveys

There are some indicators, and they add up to a rather mixed picture, but certainly no absolute proof that there is a significant change in workers' attitudes. But those indicators aren't the only measure. What about doing the obvious thing of asking the workers, by means of attitude surveys? Well, there are thousands of attitude surveys made. Employers make them as a tool of management. Public opinion polls to provide information for journalists and commen-

tators are common enough. Governments make surveys sometimes which throw light upon these factors. There are a lot of quite serious deficiencies in attitude surveys, and it doesn't help that the surveys that are made are extremely fragmented; they're not made as part of some coordinated plan. Very few of them are reliably continuous in time, and in any case expressing satisfaction is certainly not the same as being satisfied.

However, with all those limitations, there's quite a mass of significant information available from a number of countries, and again one has to face the fact that the picture presented is a very mixed one. In a way, you can always find the attitude survey that will prove whatever it is you want to prove. If you want to prove that workers' attitudes are changing, suitable survey evidence is available. To take a couple of instances of significant pieces of work, there's a very famous work by some British sociologists of the mid-1960's which was designed to test the theory of embourgeoisement--the idea that as workers became more affluent, they would adopt recognizably traditional middle class modes of life. That survey, albeit on a small and localized sample, suggested that there was no great dissatisfaction amongst those workers. They had what the authors called an instrumental attitude to their work--that is, workers went to work to earn enough money to live on and to enjoy themselves outside work. They didn't have very strong views about what work they did; some of them didn't like it very much, but they were still satisfied with their employment. And another interesting thing emerged: they were pretty well-disposed to their management, to their firm. But particularly important is the survey of working conditions conducted by the University of Michigan for the Department of Labor. First made in 1969, this survey was reconducted in 1973 by the Survey Research Center at Michigan with the title "Quality of Employment Survey." Slight changes were made from the 1969 model, but they're still comparable to some extent. A national survey was made covering 1,496 employed persons. (It

has been open to some criticism on the ground that the sample of 1,496 includes all kinds of managers and white-collar workers, and that the priorities of these groups might have influenced the results.) For job satisfaction, the survey was based on responses on 23 facets of the job and general questions about satisfaction It found that for practical purposes there had been no change in overall job satisfaction between 1969 and 1973. When you broke the thing down into subgroups by sex, age, race, education, or employment status, there appeared to be no substantial change over the four years as far as overall satisfaction was concerned Reporting these results in the Monthly Labor Review in November 1973, the authors asked whether there ever was a trend in declining job satisfaction. They went to the trouble of examining some 15 surveys, going back to 1958, with reanalysis of some of the data which was designed to exclude some non-workers in the sample, and they suggested that that evidence too seemed to indicate very little or no change in attitude. They went on to tackle a couple of special questions. They asked people whether they had been involved in industrial sabotage, and they asked them about drug use. Although I have not seen the questionnaire itself, I wonder about the accuracy of responses to questions of that kind. However, the findings indicated that such reports of sabotage as there were, were commonest amongst workers who had said they were dissatisfied, and amongst young workers. They were also more common amongst men than women, and again for drugs, reports were commonest amongst dissatisfied workers--this time, dissatisfied workers over 30 years of age. That's marginal to my argument; I report it as something of general interest.

The picture overall is one of not much grass roots change in attitudes, but we've noticed some causes likely to produce stress in labor-management relations, and an atmosphere in several advanced industrial countries of social change. In addition it would seem that work itself is decidely changing, though the ways in which it is doing so seem to be predictible and presumably can be dealt with adequately by suitable manpower and training policies.

We cannot say from the evidence we have that work is becoming generally harder or softer but certainly there seems to be no evidence that it's changing for the worse. I think we must conclude that arguments about work and alienation are aften overstated, but that there are signs of stress. There's another aspect. Do we want in our societies simply to rush around like fire engines trying to counter trouble? Or shall we take a positive line and ask how can we improve working conditions, how can we improve people's work--at which they after all spend a great deal of their lives? We don't necessarily have to subscribe to the zero growth aim which has been much discussed in Europe in order to argue that we should make improvements in work. It's simply a question of whether we want to spend some of the results of our productivity increases made possible by technological and organizational change on improving, amongst other things, our quality of working life. And if so, how? Satisfaction at work would seem to be no mean goal in itself. Certainly the subject is interesting to my own as well as other international organizations. We are also concerned with another relevant development, the formulation of social indicators. You know the concept that just as societies have already developed reasonably useful indicators of economic growth, so societies should develop measurable standards for indicating social improvements, amongst which in OECD's social indicators program we have quite specifically included satisfaction at work.

Where we go must depend upon the balance best struck between the needs of efficiency, the needs of production, and the needs of the workers. I think it's necessary to say that because in a lot of the discussion about workers' attitudes one finds sadly little consideration of the effects of this, that, or the other proposal on overall economic efficiency, which after all is another important goal of our societies.

Before concluding, I want to offer you two thoughts which are basic to our subject. Firstly, what a discrepancy there is between our technological know-

how and success and our understanding of people at work--the people who operate and manage the marvels of technology. Wouldn't it be nice if we knew more about that side? Secondly, what would happen if we made an investment in understanding people at work on the order of the investment that we make in space programs?

In the next lecture we'll be looking at some efforts that are being made toward greater understanding, and utilizing that understanding.

Question: Did you say that the general trend is toward more worker control of the production process?

Answer: I'm putting this in two different ways. Control is a word that has connotations in Europe of "away with private enterprise and let the workers run industry from the top." That's not quite how some of these people see it. They say,"No, we don't want to get mixed up in management. We'll let management manage, but we do want to be able to stop management from doing things which the workers dislike." It's a matter of semantics whether one calls that worker control. Of course, I don't want to suggest to you that in all European countries the unions are on the march about that particular phenomenon. I say there are signs of it. I said that in Sweden there is a frontal attack on managerial prerogatives. In Britain the major metalworking union, a very important one with 1,300,000 members, is intent on realizing this goal, which is already partly realized in many British factories: that the management cannot bring in a new piece of equipment unless the workers agree in advance both to bringing it in and to the conditions on which it might be worked. There have been notable cases about this. For example, the nationalized British Railroads have been developing an advanced passenger train. They reached a stage of wanting to talk to the locomotive engineers' union about the manning of this train, and the locomotive engineers' union didn't agree with the management proposals. British Rail had occasion to move that train half a mile and used the development staff to move it. As a protest against this the locomotive drivers called a strike that shut

down the whole railway network in Britain for a day. You can imagine the impact that this kind of action can have on managerial functions. It's a rather interesting and a very understudied aspect of industrial relations. Another line of approach is one form or another of workers' participation, ranging from reconstruction of the board through workers on the board, through workers' councils, collective bargaining, autonomous work groups--a whole range of devices we shall be discussing in our third meeting.

Lecture 2

Last time we looked at the significance of work and the way that work was changing in the advanced industrial societies, to which we are limiting ourselves in this series. We looked at the technological, economic and social factors which underly these changes, also the related changes in workers' attitudes, and we touched on the relevance of the changes to work discipline and consequently to economic progress. We also took note of some of the more important shifts in the labor force such as those from the manufacturing to the service sector, from private to public employment, and from blue-collar to white-collar employment jobs, and we looked at some of the indicators of worker dissatisfaction. We noted that the evidence was somewhat inconclusive but that there was reason to suppose that appreciable changes of attitudes are occurring which call for some response on the part of our societies with respect to work, quite apart from the desirability of improving work and working conditions as goals in themselves.

We touched also on some of the responses that are being made in other countries. Right now these matters are under consideration by international organizations, several of which have become concerned in the last five years with the problems we're discussing. For instance, NATO's Committee on Challenges to Modern Society has been responsible for a very interesting report by a British consultant, N.A.B. Wilson, on the quality of working life. This has been published by the British Stationary Office (i.e., the Government Printing Office). The European Economic Community has put into its Social Action Program a great deal about humanization of work and has gone so far as to propose "the immediate undertaking of studies in collaboration with the social partners

(that's a European expression meaning trade unions and employers) with a view to the abolition of assembly line working. Solutions should be sought by sector and applied on a community basis." Well, those are fighting words--to abolish the assembly line. Bold as that sounds, I think it will be a long time before we see the last of the assembly line. (In any event only a small proportion of workers are actually "on the line," and work dissatisfaction exists elsewhere, too.) The OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) has conducted a number of activities in this field and is to hold in October, 1974, an international conference under the title of "Work in a Changing Industrial Society." The subject is on the agenda of the Council of Europe. And the ILO (International Labor Organization) and its associate, the International Institute for Labor Studies, in Geneva are also doing work in this field.

The Work Task

We now turn to changes which are coming about in the advanced industrial societies in relation to work itself and its framework. These changes are related firstly, to the task itself--the work task--secondly, to the conditions under which work is carried out, and thirdly, to the nature of the industrial enterprise and the authority structure--to the area where workers' participation is being discussed. Tonight we shall be examining the first of these factors. In the next lecture we shall turn to the second and third and deal particularly with what I consider to be very important European developments on worker participation, and we'll bring the threads together.

We noted that the Swedish government had expressed concern that industry of the future should be able to recruit enough workers. As the Swedes look at these things, while the country has progressed as a society, one sub-system of society--that is, the industry of the country--did not seem to have kept pace with general social improvement. When the worker was at work, he felt himself

to be a second class citizen; when he was not at work, he was a first class citizen, and the difference bothered the Swedes. They said, "Cannot we do something to make industry more appealing to work in? Industry exists for the good of the community and people should be proud of working in industry, should enjoy it insofar as that can be made possible." Let's examine that, said the rather forward-looking Swedes (and remember that Sweden is probably the most advanced of our societies as indeed it is the wealthiest society in the world in terms of the economists' measure of gross national product per capita). I have instanced Sweden but the viewpoint I have just mentioned has become increasingly common in Western Europe generally in recent years.

Well, the work itself first of all. What can we do to change the work itself in ways that will be better for our societies? One way is that work is being reorganized in numbers of cases so as to draw more on workers' creativity and give them a greater deal of control over the job, in ways which make use of the natural vigor and ability of the work group. In Europe today whole new factories are being designed on these new principles. At a seminar I attended in Paris just a year ago, an official of the Swedish Employers' Organization went so far as to say--and it's an astonishing statement--that no more traditional factories are being laid down in Sweden, and that in ten years time there'll be no factories left in Sweden on the old kind of assembly line basis. Now I think there may be some exaggeration in that statement, but that it could be made at all does give an impression of the bold way in which the Swedes are reacting to the problem of work.

Our societies, then, have moved a long way from the agrarian and mercantile societies of past centuries. The everyday operation of our present complex advanced societies depends on certain assumptions: that people will carry out a multitude of different jobs in a manner which has regard for the fundamental need of society for reasonably cheap and effective goods and services of the

kinds society wants at a time when society wants them. This, of course, imposes a work discipline, though, as I sketched out last time, we could conceivably opt for a less consumption-oriented culture. In that case, obviously we would have to pay a price in terms of our command of goods and services. But the signs are that most people don't want to give up affluence. Indeed they want more of it, and although the price of affluence is now more questioned, and some people are talking quite a lot about zero growth, we have to recognize that such expectations have been built into people's outlook by now that I'm sure there'd be a great deal of disturbance if the expectations were unfulfilled. Well, in planning to introduce to you the work that's going on in Europe, particularly at the moment (also to some extent in this country), I was faced with the problem of deciding what to do about the whole body of knowledge which underlies these innovations, mainly contributed by the behavioral sciences. I could easily spend the whole three sessions talking about those. I've decided to settle for a thumbnail sketch of "how we got here," and then give you some information about a few of the precise changes.

I don't know of any important full consideration of performance of the work task before the famous contribution of Frederick Winslow Taylor around the first decade or so of this century. We can summarize Taylor's contribution by saying that he directed attention to the value of close scientific analysis of the task. On the one hand this led to the development of work study as we know it today, and on the other, although Taylor himself believed in the efficiency of a high wage policy, the manner in which his work was used led to deep, widespread, often very justified, suspicions on the part of workers that work study was something which was likely to result in their being required to work at a back-breaking speed. As one re-reads Taylor, one can only conclude that his model of the human being was somewhat deficient.

Even without Taylor's analysis, it is true to say that until World War II it was widely accepted by people in industry that the most efficient way of organizing work was to break it down into tiny fragments. The most detailed division was, as it was conceived, the best. Secondly, again generally speaking, one designed work processes with regard to plant and equipment and then one recruited workers to man the job. One did not take the working group and design the process so as to suit the working group. Thirdly, with bigger markets and with longer production runs, mass production came increasingly to be used, with all that that implied with respect to repetitious work.

But change was on its way, and as early as the 1940's the French sociologist Georges Friedmann was arguing in favor of enlarging rather than dividing jobs and pointing to the harmful impact that fragmented jobs could have on the worker. This has been put by one writer in a rather interesting way. He said, "In past ages when a small child greeted Daddy as he came home from work he could say, 'Daddy, what did you do?' and Daddy could point to the harvest that he'd taken in, to the chair that he'd made, or the pair of shoes that he'd made; now the child might ask and Daddy could say, if he was being truthful, 'Well, I turned a wrench 2264 times,' and it doesn't mean an awful lot in human terms to the child." That rather brings out one aspect of the division of jobs.

As Friedmann was working in France, in the United States Abraham Maslow was postulating his famous hierachy of needs, which has become the foundation of much of later thinking about motivation. You know the stages: first of all, that in terms of human wants, the physiological needs must be satisfied. If one is freezing, if one is in the Sahara and hasn't had water or anything to eat for the last three days, then one's priorities are fairly clear. If those needs are satisfied, <u>then</u> the human being tends to think of satisfying the safety needs, not only the very obvious ones of not falling under a bus, but also danger to security of employment and, speaking more generally, the human

need to have familiar things around one, to have a fairly even tenor in one's working life. Thirdly, comes the need for love, affection, belonging--that range of desiderata. Fourthly, the need for esteem or respect, and fifthly, the one that's really causing quite a conflict of opinion these days, self-actualization--the desire for self-fullfillment. One of the fundamentals of today's argument about work is whether workers do now want to self-actualize.

Still going back to the 1940's, this time to the University of Michigan, Rensis Likert and his team were associated with experiments which have led to a great deal of new thinking about measurement of human resources in enterprises, about the characteristics of high and low producing work groups, and about participatory managerial and supervisory styles. Again this overlapped with another line of development, this time in London, where an exceptionally able group of behavioral scientists was working in the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, analyzing what its members came to call the "man-task interface." One of the experiments with which the Tavistock was concerned in the late 1940's will serve to indicate the relevance of its work to our interests here. It concerned a British coal mine and the British nationalized coal industry, the same National Coal Board that has just been going through a rather traumatic experience in Britain. But on this occasion it was concerned with introducing mechanization in a coal mine, using the longwall process, using coal cutters and mechanical conveyers. The Coal Board expected that the introduction of this new equipment and method would lead to quite a considerable increase in output per man. They tried it but in fact production decreased. Well, why? In the old process, the coal had been got by small, closely-knit working groups with a considerable amount of autonomy--little groups often of four or six people--and if somebody was feeling off-color today, somebody had been out drinking last night, then the group could adapt for that and other people could shoulder a little bit of extra work. They were very closely-knit groups; closeness

was added by the conditions under which they worked, and of course in that industry and certainly at that time by the ever-present concern with safety. Well, what happened? Under the new dispensation men were working in groups of 40 to 60, working on the long coal face, and they had expert technical services--the foremen--to run the whole operation. They didn't like it, and in fact production fell, absenteeism rose, accidents rose--all the familiar indicators came into play. With the advice of the Tavistock Institute a simple remedy was applied. The Tavistock Institute helped to reconstruct the work groups in such a way that each did a certain part of the work and worked closely with the other groups and behold, productivity increased, and absenteeism and accidents both fell. It just shows what you can do with this kind of work group.

What all this led to in Tavistock's thinking was the concept of socio-technical systems, a very important concept for what was to follow from this line of thought, particularly in Europe. Now there's nothing really difficult about the concept of the socio-technical system. As I said, years ago if you were considering how work was to be done you tended simply to think, if you were a manager or an engineer, of the plant and then getting bodies to look after it. But now people said, what we have is not just a technical system at the work place; we also have a social system, and that too needs to be tailor-made for the job, and the two systems must be optimized.

Then in the late 1950's, Fred Herzberg of Western Reserve University proposed his two factor, hygiene-motivator theory. Briefly, this suggests that there are two factors which influence the worker at work, and in different ways. Firstly, "hygiene" factors--dissatisfiers, you may call them--things like pay and working conditions; if they are not right, the worker perceives it and is dissatisfied, but if they are right, tl still doesn't of itself make him a highly motivated worker. Secondly, the "motivating" factors--factors such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, if it offers intrinsic

interest and advancement--these factors actually stimulate the worker to give of his best and to enjoy his work a great deal more. Meanwhile at Yale Chris Argyris was drawing attention to the differences between the goals of the enterprise, as perceived by the management, and the separate and collective goals of the workers in the enterprise. The enterprise should, he postulated, be structured to harmonize the different goals as far as possible. And, at M.I.T., Douglas McGregor was working out, in the 1950's, his famous comparisons of styles of management: the traditional form--Theory X: work is horrible, everybody hates to do it, we only do it because we have to, etc. (I'm exaggerating how McGregor described it but that was the kind of message that came over.) Secondly, Theory Y, which held that indeed there was a great deal of satisfaction to be obtained from work, that workers could and should be trusted, and that managements' goals and workers' goals needn't by any means be all that incongruent. I well remember a conference in London at which a manager had been sitting rather grimly listening to all the new teachings of the behavioral sciences--new in his case, meaning since he left school about 40 years before--and he hadn't opened his mouth, but when the conference reached Theory X (the statement about the dreariness of work), he shot up his hand and he said, "I want to say that I've been sitting here for three days, and this is the first bit of common sense that I've heard!" So you see, there are still differing opinions in industry, even about Theory X and Theory Y.

During the 1960's, the concept of human resources management emerged. The idea of it was that much more regard should be paid than hitherto to making the fullest use of human talent and good-will; also the Michigan people developed and refined the notion of human resource accounting, the measurement of this good-will. It is common to place a cash value on your plant and your stock, and even on your customer good-will. Well, what about the value to you of a highly motivated, satisfied, highly trained work force? That's worth a great

deal more than its opposite. An enterpirse possesses human capital as well as share capital and plant, said these people.

Well, I'm sorry for putting these theories forward in such a brief thumbnail way. That's the constraint of time. Time also precludes my going through a critique of them. All the theories I mentioned have been criticized at some time or another and are not beyond criticism, but between them, and others I haven't mentioned, they've made a considerable change in what we might call management's conventional wisdom. So now, with all this in mind, we can return to the roots of our subject. I would like to go over four contrasting examples of where the kind of knowledge we've talked about has been used. Two are Swedish cases and two are British. That isn't because I couldn't find American cases; I could find plenty, but I suspect the overseas cases will give you a wider perspective of these issues.

To start with a nice small homely one: The Volkswagen Service Garage in Stockholm--quite a small outfit--was suffering from very high turnover, numerous customer complaints about the quality of work, and a rather deficient payment structure. The payment structure isn't entirely a red herring, but in the interests of brevity I'll not mention what happened about that, but talk about the work organization. What had happened in the past was that the customer brought his car to reception and said, "I think there's something wrong with the carburetor. Will you do something about it?" and the customer section took delivery and passed it on to the right expert in the works who dealt with carburetors--to a specialist. (All the specialists used the common body of the garage's technical equipment.) Ultimately, the car found its way through the process and back, ready for the customer to collect it. Well, the man who finally got it ready for the customer, who put it on line for the customer, probably didn't even know what had been done to it; he hadn't seen the customer or heard the customer's complaint. When the customer arrived, he wanted to ask

questions. Just as with some garages one knows onself, he didn't exactly get the kind of service he sought. Well, in went a team of behavioral science people and they split up the work force into work groups of four to six, each group containing specialists--one specialist in each of a number of major aspects of the work. Each group was issued with its own technical equipment, it handled the whole job, and the work group divided the work up between its own members. The foreman didn't come along and say, "You do this, you do that, and you do the other." There was a group supervisor or foreman, but a lot of his functions were delegated to the working group, and the result was that he had more time to spare and so was able to deal with the customer. In this way, the customer actually got a great deal more personal service, and--this figure might surprise you--although there might have been other factors like an economic upturn involved, labor turnover was cut from 50 percent to 10 percent per annum after this innovation at that particular works.

My second Swedish example is the Saab-Scania engine assembly at a place called Södertälje. Well, this is not only the sort of thing that the Swedes do rather well, but they also tell us all about it rather well; there's even a report in English called "The Saab-Scania Report" about this particular one, which has also been reported in an OECD seminar paper. The significance of this case was that here for the first time, group work was being used in a method of production, the assembly line, which everyone has regarded as posing the biggest possible challenge to the idea of trying new methods. I well remember myself, some seven or eight years ago, talking to one of the leading experts on this kind of work organization and saying, "What on earth can you do with the automobile assembly line?" I expected, being an engineer, that the answer would be "nothing." But he said, "What we must do is to go a great deal further back towards making cars by hand, individually from start to finish." Well that sounds like a kind of William Morris 19th Century idea, but although it isn't

happening quite like that, the changes that have been made in some automobile plants are certainly in that direction. Now this, I repeat, was an engine assembly. It was for the Saab 99 engine. It was in a works which had about 5,000 employees--hardly to be compared with General Motors but on the other hand, not a tiny works either. A new engine assembly line had to be organized. The key was seen by the designers as being a highly mechanized system of materials handling. That was the essential thing, to get this product streaming out. Here is the description of this as supplied by one of the persons involved:

> "All the components which go into the finished engine are loaded into a wagon. These wagons are conveyed out onto an endless loop, and moved around on this loop by a mechanical drive unit. Along this main loop are a number of side tracks. These side tracks lead into subsystems, which are independent of the main loop. In each and every one of these subsystems, the work can be organized in a way adapted most favorably to the individual situation. The parts are kept in the wagon, which serves as an assembly table. In some cases, two qualified fitters may work together in the assembly of the entire engine. They take a wagon off the main loop and divide the assembly work between themselves in any way they see fit, and when the engine is finished, it is mechanically conveyed to the main loop. The two fitters can themselves decide how much time they need to finish an engine. In another subsystem, six newly-employed fitters may work on an engine. They have not yet learned as many of the operations involved in total engine assembly as the two-man team has, but rather have each learned a sixth of the work. They remove assembly wagons from the main loop at a pace at which they can manage to assemble the engines (approximately three times as fast as in the previous example).
>
> In this way, the work organization can be continuously suited to the current structure of qualification within the assembly department and within the various groups in this department. Every individual can continuously learn more parts of the assembly work and can eventually be able to perform the entire assembly himself. Another essential advantage with this system is that it is less vulnerable to breakdown than the conventional assembly line. Even if one of the subsystems is disabled and taken out of operation, the others can continue to function. This production system has been in practice for about a year and the experiences so far are good. Work efficiency seems to be at least comparable to that obtained with a classical work organization. The additional expenses entailed by this system in terms of larger buildings, more material in production, etc., seem to be outweighed by the economic advantages of a lower personnel turnover rate and low absenteeism. And above all, these new jobs have proved to be sufficiently attractive to make it possible to recruit Swedish labor to fill the positions. (This has become increasingly difficult at Swedish automobile factories with conventional assembly lines.)"

How many people were involved in that particular operation? It started with about 40 people in 1969 and by 1973 there were 1500 people on these group methods.

Now, a very different one. We've had a couple of blue-collar cases, let me now cite a white-collar case. I'll just mention briefly some work that was carried out in the British chemical firm of ICI by a former student of Fred Herzberg's. (It's been written up in the Harvard Business Review by the way.) It concerned research officers in laboratories. Up to the time of the innovation, the ICI method had been to have a kind of officer-enlisted men division. There were the graduates, the Ph.D.'s, and so on, the professional cream as they were looked on by the management, and then there were the other ranks--Sergeants, Privates First Class, and so on, who had acquired various degrees of knowledge and experience, but who had no major formal professional qualifications. There were numerous laboratory rules which limited what the lower status worker could do. All sorts of things had to be countersigned by a professional scientific officer and so on. Well, what the behavioral scientists did in this laboratory was first of all to eliminate this old class structure, and replace it by a somewhat less structured situation in which everybody could fulfill himself rather more. Thus the low-grade officers could write their own reports, they didn't have to take them to be signed or anything like that, and indeed in one rather interesting case a number of reports were judged as to merit, and the results suggested that some of the so-called "non-qualified" people had done rather better scientifically speaking than some of the qualified people. And again this change brought with it better job satisfaction and certainly reduced labor turnover and absenteeism.

Fourthly, let's take a very different case, this time from a major oil company. It was in fact Shell U.K. Ltd. This is different from the others; it isn't concerned with work groups or anything like that. It occurred to the

Shell Company (and I'm talking strictly about Shell United Kingdom, not about any of the other branches of Shell, though some of them are also interested in new ideas about the organization of work). Well, Shell U.K. thought they were having rather too much trouble at some of their refineries and chemical plants; too much industrial relations strife. What was wrong? So they set up a little three-man long-range employee relations planning group to tell them what was wrong, and more important, what should be done about it. After a period of gestation, the group came out with the idea that they thought that one ought to start at the beginning and there was a lot that was old fashioned about the company's management of its labor and really the thing to do would be to change managerial styles. Well, that's a thundering big job of course, and you've got to have something to change to, you can't just say "change styles." So they decided that the next step was to work out a series of company objectives, a kind of company philosophy, and they spent some months working on that--talking to people, particularly top management. Then when the controlling board said yes, we like this idea, do something to implement it, the company set up a pretty big program, of what have been called "cascade" meetings or conferences. They started by going quietly into discussion with a group at the top; then each of those people at the top met his subordinate group, each of those met his subordinates and so on. Parallel with this and to some extent mixing the two, they had a corresponding series of meetings with the trade union hierarchies; they had meetings with top trade union leaders, a kind of weekend at a quiet hotel, and worked through all the way down to local meetings of shop stewards, and of course, shop stewards were also present at the meetings at which workers themselves, in the form of primary work groups, were consulted about the proposal.

I talked a little earlier about the concept of objectives and a company philosophy, but if you start with a cut and dried document, what's the use of

talking to everybody; what do you do if you get feedback which suggests that you change the policy? Well, the company was able to devise things in such a way that they offered a pretty broad framework, not too detailed, and they made use of feedback to adjust it until finally they reached a kind of participative management philosophy--back to workers' participation again--which certainly seemed to make changes in the way life went on the shop floor. The report of the company's representative at the OECD Seminar of which I have already spoken did actually go so far as to say that the result of this had been a lasting improvement in attitudes and motivation, though because of management and consultant personnel changes, I believe the original momentum hasn't been fully followed up. But, to look at the positive side, I am sure that you would find that this program, this honest, decent program, had effects which had rubbed off in better human relationships within the establishments, and it certainly affected managerial styles.

I've given you four examples of different kinds; I could have given you many more. The Norwegians have a very interesting one, for example; they have redesigned a merchant ship as a socio-technical system. This has caused some tension in the old kind of Norwegian mercantile traditions; you know that this is a kind of work which tends to be highly structured, highly governed by law, as well as by industrial agreements, and incorporating strong disciplinary power on the part of the captain of the ship. There may have been a certain amount of conflict about that, but I'm assured that life in at least some parts of the Norwegian Merchant Marine has improved as a result of the re-thinking.

Now, I guess the questions you would want to ask are: How prevalent are these cases? Are they all successful? What are the common lessons? And what's the overall evaluation? I'll do my best to answer these questions. As to prevalence I could have used scores more cases. I picked out four that sprang to mind as being a fair cross section. The number of firms that have made

changes of this kind in more than a tiny way is certainly many hundreds in Europe, possibly thousands, but of course it depends on where you would draw the line. The prevalence is greatest, I would say, in Norway, where people will tell you that this new kind of thinking about autonomous work groups and so on has become the conventional wisdom in Norwegian industry. People don't think the old way any longer, so my Norwegian friends tell me. Next perhaps in Sweden and Denmark, and it is noticeable about all three of these countries that the idea of this kind of change was being pushed very strongly from the top by tripartite committees in each case: Cooperation Council in Norway and in in Denmark and a Development Council in Sweden, these being union-management bodies. In Norway after the original expenses of the work had been shared by employers and unions, the government chipped in with half of the cost. It's in those three countries that there's most change to be seen. Then perhaps the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and then rather few in France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Australia, and Belgium and so on. There have been plenty of cases in the U.S., too. Plenty in this sense probably means something to be counted in scores rather than thousands, but even so there are some notable examples. AT&T has done a lot of reconstruction of work, there's the old Harwood Manufacturing case that was worked on by the Michigan people, Proctor and Gamble has done some work of this kind, and there's the increasingly well-known General Food Plant at Topeka, Kansas.

Well, my second question: What are the common factors? What can you say about all these things?

Question: In Europe, or particularly Scandinavian countries, is this concentrated in any particular industry?

Answer: I think I ought to take a moment to tell you a little bit about the genesis of the Norwegian work. It's something I find rather exciting. The Norwegians, particularly the Norwegian unions, were interested in industrial

democracy, and eventually they set up this cooperation council which decided to look into industrial democracy on a broad front. Its first piece of work was a commissioned study of the device of having a worker-director on the board of the company. That was very small scale; but interestingly the study concluded that the worker on the board really wasn't a great help. Since then the Norwegians have legislated for workers on the board, but that's another matter. The second job was to make innovations in four very carefully chosen different kinds of firms. There was a board factory, there was a strip mill in an old steel works, there was a chemical factory, and so on, and the Work Research Institute of Oslo, which had been coordinating this work from a professional standpoint, arranged to reconstruct work groups in each of these plants. One of them, incidentally, failed. It didn't fail, though, because of the work; it failed because the workers in question were on an incentive system and were paid by results; effectively in the reconstructed group earnings rose steeply, and then everybody else in the plant said, "We're not going to tolerate this kind of difference in income." So, as I understand it, the innovation was discontinued.

But the Norwegians moved on, and they've worked on a wide variety of organizations, certainly not confined either to any one industry, or indeed to industry. The same is true of other countries.

Now to my common factors. The first is that it is very unwise to think that you can embark on this sort of thing lightly. It's not the kind of thing to be done at the whim of a plant manager and tried out for a month and then cancelled. The kind of change that has to be made is a change that goes deep, and it's not very easily reversible, and if you do reverse it then you will, to say the least, risk quite a loss of morale.

Secondly, it's a common factor that virtually all these innovations have to do with some decentralization of decision-making. Decision-making powers are delegated down toward the work group.

Thirdly, most of them involve, both in their introduction and in their opeartion, participation by individual workers themselves: this isn't an idea dreamed up in the office and imposed on the workers; this is something to which the workers are a party. Some of the changes involve these autonomous or semi-autonomous work groups I talked about, and the general idea of these work groups is that not only do they allocate the work between themselves, but they have built in the inspection, control, and maintenance functions, so that you don't operate a maintenance department for the whole works--each group conducts its own maintenance--and for many of them there's a very basic change in the role of the supervisor. Many supervisors in Scandinavia have had to learn a whole new way of life. The supervisor tends to cease to become the old style boss man walking around with his bowler hat giving orders to everybody, and he becomes rather more the go-between and the servant of the group, the "I fix it" man for the group rather than a boss figure. Some of them have not taken kindly to this change, but both in this respect and indeed as far as operators generally are concerned, the changes have spelt a great involvement in continuous training and education, and I should say that these Norwegian innovations were backed by a kind of management and trade union training program which, given the smaller size of the country, would be regarded as fantastic in Britain or in the United States.

Another common factor is that you can't easily isolate a major change. When you've reorganized work on these lines, it's likely to change your whole management structure. Another lesson that's come out of these changes is that it's best to start at the top. The man on the shop floor can often say with some justice, "Why does everybody always pick on me?" When he sees management initiating some changes and starting with management, he's apt to attach a great deal more importance to it than if somebody comes on the shop floor and says, "Now we'll do it this way." Another common factor is that the change has

to be a voluntary one. I cannot think of any of the well-known cases in this field which haven't been raised in the form of, "Look, we want to put this as a proposal to you. If you don't like it, okay, we'll stay as we are, but this is what this change seems to offer." The changes have virtually always been managerially induced. It's usually management who thought it up as a plan in the first place and put it to the workers. But as I've said, in the case of the Norwegian Council, some of the early experiments at least were worked out between union and management.

Question: Have there been any cases where the changes have in fact been proposed from below--not by a national trade union but in any specific factories?

Answer: I have not come across any, but it's awfully difficult sometimes to trace the origin of these things. It may well be that some shop steward has said to a personnel manager, "You know, I was over at so-and-so's the other day and they are on to some interesting changes," which triggers off an investigation and perhaps change.

What is not in common to the examples is the role of the trade unions. Some of the innovations have been in non-union firms, but in others--in the Norwegian cases or in most of the Norwegian cases at any rate--the unions are closely involved in the whole affair from start to finish. Lastly, a thing that we have not yet touched on has been the role of the change agent. These things tend to be too difficult, too delicate, too technical to be within ordinary management expertise, and so managements have tended to use consultants--either ordinary management consultants or academic consultants--and the role of the consultant really does need to be very, very carefully handled. Bad handling by the consultant has produced considerable trouble. One fairly common trouble has been the difficulty that many behavioral scientists have in putting their analyses and proposals to managers and workers in intelligible terms.

Now the results. Most of the innovations--not every one, but the great majority--have been successful. They have been successful, that is, in terms either of productivity or of work satisfaction, or both, and, as we saw in the Saab case, there's been a tendency for turnover and absenteeism costs to be cut. General production costs may in some cases be up, and in one particularly famous case, the Volvo Company in Sweden, the managing director has expressed the view that it may well be (I can't remember the precise figure) that the costs are between 10 percent and 25 percent more expensive on the new basis; but, says he, this way not only do I reduce turnover and absenteeism but I know that I can count on being able to recruit a labor force in years to come. If I didn't do it this way, maybe I couldn't. In the long term this way seems less costly.

Well, how does one evaluate the whole of this range of innovations? In principle, I don't think there can be any doubt that it's a good thing--that it's a positive move toward better societies; but of course it's a far cry from saying that to regarding this kind of thing as a panacea. Why are these things done? Who introduces them? And why? Quite a number of managements, quite frankly, have been simply motivated by a tight labor market. They can't get people and they think they can help recruitment and reduce turnover and absenteeism this way. In a number of cases, the firms are in new industries, and for them it has seemed easy to start planning from scratch and to plan the new way. But there are undoubtedly cases where a quite potent factor has been simply the desire to improve satisfaction of work.

Work Organization and the Union

Now, you may have been thinking that I've been dwelling somewhat unduly on the role of management. What about the unions? Well, union actions vary. In Scandinavia, they tend to go with the changes to a considerable extent. It's

part of their industrial democracy program. In Britain, the union attitude is somewhat skeptical. They tend to say, "Well, if management wants to go ahead with these things, let them, but we'll first examine them to see if there's anything in them that we don't like and that must go out, and we'll also see if we can get a bit more of what we do like at the same time," a good old Samuel Gompers kind of reaction. Some European unions are opposed to the changes on doctrinal grounds. They say this kind of thing is meddling with capitalism. "We don't recognize capitalism, they say, and we're not going to do anything to keep it alive; we don't want anything to do with it." That's somewhat of a minority view. Even within a country, of course, it's not right to say that the unions have a single uniform view anymore than that would be true in the United States. With that reservation, it seems to me that the prevailing trade union view in the United States is one of skepticism. We took note last time of the rather trenchant statement made by Mr. William Winpisinger of the International Association of Machinists. We also mentioned the suspicions, in some trade union circles at least, that behavioral scientists and commentators on the subject generally were tending to read professional, middle-class attitudes into workers' needs and outlook and were over-emphasizing the idea of self-actualization.

The American unions note also that in this country, quite a number of the changes that have been made have been made in non-union firms, and they have a suspicion that in at least some of those cases the very innovation has been aimed at binding workers close to management and, by inference, making them rather less close to trade unions. I had the opportunity a few days ago of seeing one of these behavioral science consultant's reports (an American example) with manuscript annotation by a union official, and opposite the consultant's rationale for the change he had written "simplistic, self-serving drivel." Hard words, but reading the text, one could see where the notion arose.

Well, obviously, argue the unions, when workers want jobs enriched--when they want autonomous work groups, as the employers and academics sometimes say they do--then they will ask for them and the unions would become involved. Up to the moment, it appears that they don't. Another union criticism is that in reorganizing work, some managements at least are trying to get workers to undertake a wider range of work and responsibilities. As the unions see it, management may get this, and perhaps a faster work pace, without adequate monetary recompense; hence, innovations may be characterized as a disguised means of increasing production and reducing costs at the expense of workers' potential wage increases and rights. One is reminded of a story told about Frederick Taylor, who genuinely wanted to increase workers' pay. Yes, he improved workers' pay, but the workers' pay was increased by 61 percent and the management got a 362 percent production increase out of it, or something of that kind.

As far as the workers are concerned, in the changes that I've talked about, the response has been generally positive. It's ranged from considerable enthusiasm to satisfaction, down to a quite small minority who tend to dislike being wrenched away from routine. (Of course, it depends on how well thought out the changes are.) I'd like to have said something about the different responses of different age groups, but we must really pass on.

To sum up then, on this part, I think the changes we've been talking about do offer the chance of a step forward in the development of industrial societies. I don't think the results are likely to be spectacular, but it does seem to me that if changes are carefully introduced, and if managements and unions establish a cooperative framework, then they are a most promising sign for the future.

Question: We're talking about worker morale and how they cater to these work groups, by breaking down into small work groups. Did it have any effect on the outside attitudes? Were they friendlier or happier when they went home?

Answer: I don't know of any inquiries that have been made about that. All I can tell you is hearsay from my talking to these workers and from what I've heard, what I've seen in filmed interviews (there are films about this sort of thing), and the evidence that I've acquired suggests that you do get a happier human being as well as a happier worker. It does carry over; it's not just concerned with work. Of course there are many individual differences, and one wouldn't want to generalize too far.

Question: Your own studies of the supervisor and what he thinks about his loss of power--you've alluded to this several times, that perhaps they're not too happy about it--have the supervisors been studied about what their feelings are and how they adjust to this? Do they have to get rid of these people?

Answer: The role of the supervisor does emerge clearly from studies of innovations. Generally speaking, most supervisors manage to adapt, and some of them, or course, don't need to manage to adapt; they're enthusiastic, particularly the young ones. They see this as the shape of the future, and they like it. I should think that the number who do not adapt, who positively do not adapt and cannot adapt, even with extra training and help, is very small. Some of those you can accommodate in work which doesn't require them to be concerned with these working groups. Or of course they may vote with their feet and go off and find another job--in a traditional organization structure.

Question: Do you have any evidence in all your experience of the job enlargement, job rotation, whatever it is--general generic name for a team--to use as an attack against remnants of skilled labor--craft labor?

Answer: Let's distrnguish between job enlargement, job enrichment, and job rotation. They are three different things. Secondly, let's comment about the idea of a craft. As I mentioned last week, to some extent old craft demarcations are blurring, and I would agree that there are a lot in many of these

innovations which would annoy the 19th Century craftsman or even some 20th Century craftsmen. They might well feel that they were detrimental to the notion of the rights of the trade. But to what extent is society interested in this? What does society want of the craft status today? That's another big question. Again a balance must be struck between the rights of people who have got a big investment in a skill and the needs of society for the efficient employment of labor. I would be quite prepared to believe that there are firms that are interested in this from the point of view of whether craft jobs could be broken down. But on the whole it goes the other way, that they build jobs up; that's really basically essential. Another approach is the modular approach, in which everybody is encouraged to acquire as many modules of skill or training as he possibly can. There's nothing very new about this. Under the Industrial Training Act of 1964 in Britain, the Engineering Industry Training Board, which covers about two million manual workers in the metal using industries, introduced a system replacing the old style five-year apprenticeship by a modular system built up on, first of all, an absolutely basic training (in general for the whole engineering industry) of 18 months or something like that. Then there is a second period of about a year with a degree of specialization, and then a third period, much shorter, with some rather specific skill being acquired. And that seems to have worked rather well. They talk about the modules as bricks, they talk about building a wall from your bricks; it's a convenient way of looking at it.

Next time I want to talk about flexible working hours, about worker participation and I want to do some summing up.

Lecture 3

The Conditions of Work

We've now looked at most of the major changes taking place in work and workers' attitudes and some of the responses being made to the changes by way of work organization. I suggested that changes were coming about, particularly in Europe, concerned with, firstly, the conditions under which work is carried out and, secondly, the nature of the industrial enterprise and the traditional authority structure in relation to the worker. It's to these aspects we now turn before summing up our subject. I have mentioned the feeling, particularly pronounced in Sweden, that life in industry has failed to progress in pace with the social changes in our societies outside industry. It's not my concern here to evaluate this thesis, but suffice it to say that in a number of countries improvements are being made in working conditions. Of course the phrase "working conditions" covers a great many things. Obviously, there are the terms of employment, the physical working conditions, whether the walls are painted a nice color and whether you have the pleasure or otherwise of music while you work. Also included are safety, health, ergonomics, welfare arrangements, the speed of working, job security, pensions, grievance procedures--all that kind of thing. I doubt that there's anything I can contribute to your knowledge on these subjects. But I do want to deal briefly with one aspect which is not so much discussed in this country and turn then to the interesting area of flexibility in disposal of working time.

The small area I just want to mention is what the French call "mensualisation," meaning simply monthly, and that's really a kind of shorthand for the effort to achieve equality of working conditions between manual and office

workers. I use the French word because France has been a leader in this field, but in Western Europe as a whole there has been in the last eight years or so a decided trend to do away with differences between those who work with their hands and those who work with their brain. "Mensualisation" simply means that instead of being paid by the hour, the worker is paid what an old British phrase calls an upstanding wage, a wage paid regardless of the time spent at work, and of course the rest of the "staff" conditions go with it. The idea is to do away with class differences which seem outmoded and lacking in functional significance, in the interests of a united society. But I want simply to mention this now; I want to go on to talk about working time.

Flexible Working Time

If one looks back over some two hundred years, one of the perceived necessities of the Industrial Revolution was that if the manufacturing process was to be effective, then workers must come together and subordinate themselves to management at a particular workplace. This was the first and only time in history that people had been massed together industrially in this way under such constraints as to time and place. Also, in the early days of the Industrial Revolution a standard normal working week of 60 hours or more was by no means unusual in most industrial countries. Well, those hours have been considerably scaled down; indeed, it tends to be executives and some university professors who work the longest hours these days, rather than manual workers! Hours have generally fallen from over 60 to 40 or so in the last 100 years in the advanced industrial countries. But much of the notion of rigidly fixed working hours still remains. Indeed, one form of time-constraint on the worker--shift working--may actually be becoming more onerous as a constraint because of the greater capitalization of industry, and because through the computer this now applies to some extent to office workers as well as to manual workers. But the

movement that I particularly want to talk about is the move to flexibility in working time, which in one of its forms is commonly known as flex-time or flexi-time. Well, what do we mean by working time? We could mean the working lifetime. We could mean the working year, the working week, or the working day. Consideration of the working lifetime brings us into matters we've no time to discuss in detail, but I nonetheless want to point to them. When we go to work, we are rendering our service to the society in which we live, and if we happen to be a nurse, then we're tending sick patients. When, as a nurse, we go into a store, we're attended by somebody else who is making his or her contribution as a retail clerk, and so it goes on. We're all really working for each other in that sense. To follow through this notion, if we are offering society our work, over a working lifetime there's a kind of basic contribution we ought to be making; this becomes more important as we start to think--as indeed at this point in civilization's improvement I believe we can think--about the forms in which we want to take the improvements that the productive engine of society makes possible. Which of these forms do we want to accept? It's often overlooked that since the Industrial Revolution we have developed very arbitrary cut-off points. There is the point at which we leave school or other full-time education and enter the world of work (usually with very little preparation for the change). We eventually reach another magic figure, commonly as the clock points to midnight on the eve of our 65th birthday, and then society has finished with our contribution, or so it would seem.

What a change this is from more primitive forms of society. I once lived, many years ago, in an Egyptian village, and I saw how the youngsters were out working in the field or sitting listening to the teacher at various hours during the day; their transition from education to work was a very gradual one, and the work always had an obvious social importance. I saw that when the man who had ceased to be much use physically as a farmer, or as a hard-working builder, he

became, say, a watchman--a man who walked around the fields seeing that everything was all right and stood at a little watchtower at night at the edge of the village, accosting all comers to make sure that they weren't intending to rob the village. Consider the difference between those two ways of organizing work, and you have a case where primitive society seems clearly more human and advantageous than industrial society.

Another way of looking at flexibility is not so much when we start work and when we finish work but whether we do the same work all our lives. Of course a great many people don't. But many people do, and many people, sometimes trapped by the expectation of pensions, stay in jobs they hate, simply because they feel they can't afford to do otherwise. Have we not perhaps reached a stage in our societies at which we can say, "Yes, if you've been a toolmaker for 20 years and now want to become a farmer, we can make that possible. We can offer you a course in farming and you can take on this new career"? People don't always want the same thing uniformly throughout their lives anyway, and maybe the farmer wants to give up and become an academic. That should be possible too, if he has what it takes.

With change of jobs, I want to stress the likely importance of another flexibility, one of which we haven't really seen much as yet. Our society has recently started to discuss the ideas of greater flexibility between men's roles and women's roles. The idea is of the shared duties of the family meeting the needs of the marriage partners for outside work, too. Well, it's arguable that employers should be a great deal more flexible than they are in offering work, and this doesn't apply just to this aspect of the subject. It has always seemed to me that employers are unnecessarily inflexible about their offers of employment.

I would like to consider this element of flexibility rather more deeply, but time is too limited. I do want to say a little more however about the European idea of continuing education and training. This has really taken hold on the

European continent now. Probably the most advanced measure is the French Law of 1971, though there are other cases I could report. Under the French Law, the employer must (and it is a matter of obligation) release up to two percent of his employees with pay at one and the same time to follow full-time training. This is funded by a payroll tax starting with 0.8 percent of the payroll (not a small sum) and rising to 2.0 percent over a few years. There are a few constraints. The worker must have a minimum of two or three years service, and the course that he follows must be an approved one; also his leave only lasts for up to a year. Even so it's rather startling to countries which have not experimented with this kind of arrangement. In 1972, which was really the first year of operation, no fewer than 370,000 people in France benefited by this scheme. So this is another means of aiding career change, another means of giving the individual the opportunity to explore things which suit him and which interest him. One might add to this the notion of sabbaticals, common enough in academic circles, but as yet not often experienced in industry, though, to take a slightly different case, a form of long service leave has for several years now been law on a State basis in Australia.

Isn't all this rather idealistic? Well, people <u>are</u> trying some of these things. I'd like to mention the idea put forward by my own former Director in Paris, Gösta Rehn, as to how all this might be organized. He devised a rather interesting scheme whereby all employed people benefitted by what might be called a kind of credit scheme: your card was stamped, so to speak, for each hour of work that you contributed to society, and you could spend those stamps--just like trading stamps except that you got them for hours worked rather than purchases made--you could spend these stamps in time off work, by education, or if you preferred it, loafing in the South Sea Isles, or you could take long holidays at various times. There would be only one stipulation: your pension would be taken care of by the same kind of system, and you would not be allowed

under this scheme to spend your pension money. Otherwise there would inevitably be some people who would go off to the South Sea isles for their marvelous time, and come back with all their money spent and then expect society to look after them. I can't say much more about this because of time, but there are many ideas around today concerning greater flexibility of working hours on a daily, weekly, and annual basis.

I think I should point at this stage to the cost element. In this world pretty well everything has to be paid for, and if we take time off, then we're not working. If we're not working, we're not contributing to production. If we're not making things, then society isn't enjoying them. So, we're got sums to do. Do we want more wages, or do we want more leisure time? Do we want to work less hard, which we could probably afford if we don't at the same time also ask for more wages and longer holidays? Probably from a negotiator's point of view the only legitimate base for arguing about working hours these days is in terms of the contribution in hours per year. It's interesting that some countries which have many holidays and long vacations have overall much the same working year as countries which have few holidays but may have much shorter working hours.

Flexible Hours

It is in the working week and the working day that the most startling European developments have occurred. I mentioned flex-time or flexi-time--what the Germans call "gleitzeit." This is a movement which started in Germany and the German part of Switzerland, as far as my knowledge goes, and although it's by no means the general practice, it is now fairly common in Europe. The idea is that within limits the worker or the working group fixes his or its own starting and stopping times. There is what is called core time, the hours the worker has to put in at the place of work, and then beyond that is the framework time, the outside hours within which the worker must work. So instead of having a

work place oprrating for everybody from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., everybody has to be there between, say, 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.; and at the end of the working week (or sometimes month) the sum total of their hours worked must be that which they have contracted to perform. This obviously calls for a recording of time, which isn't always common in Europe for white-collar workers, but most white-collar workers are pretty glad to pay that small price for the flexibility in their lives that the arrangement gives to them. Advantages are pretty obvious. Transportation is one large important one; if you've always been frustrated by that wretched train or bus which arrives five minutes too late for work or half an hour too early, you don't have to worry anymore because it's going to be something you can accommodate with your working hours. And then there's your personal pace of life. There are individuals who seem to rejoice at getting up at five in the morning and watching the sun rise and who are at their best at the beginning of the day. There are also people who are quite the reverse, who find it terribly difficult to get up when the alarm goes off at nine in the morning but are alert and fresh in the evening. To some extent both can be accommodated through flexi-time, and they can work, provided the core hours are observed, when it suits them. Also, quite clearly personal commitments are greatly facilitated. If you wanted to pop into the library to exchange those books before you went to work, if you wanted to leave early so you could go to the travel agent's and fix up your vacation, then this is very easily done if you're using flexi-time.

However, all is not perfect in this world, and there are disadvantages to flexi-time, too--certainly from the economic point of view. Basic manning is not always easy to achieve, and particularly where jobs are interlinked or you have something like assembly line production, you just cannot operate the process with numbers of people absent. And if you're on continuous process work--necessitating shift work--then again you can't really accommodate flexi-time to

any great extent, though of course in shift work people changing shifts commonly make little personal arrangements between themselves--to work late or start early or whatever.

The other kind of idea that has been discussed quite widely is the four-day week, but because this is quite well known and discussed in the United States, I don't think there's much for me to say about it.

That then is a rather selective and brief look at some of the options that are open to us with respect to working conditions. I think we can reasonably hope that the industrial machine will go on creating wealth for us, even that that wealth will increase, and accordingly we can hope to improve our work life.

The Worker and the Enterprise

Assuming that there are improvements to be shared out, we can take them in the varying kinds of ways that I've discussed. We can also consider another area--the status of the worker in the enterprise, the role of the worker vis-à-vis the authority structure--an aspect of working life that's rarely discussed in this country as far as I can see but which is a major issue in most Western European countries. Again going back to the Industrial Revolution, here for the first time workers, capital, tools, power, and the work place all came together under the entrepreneur. In a way it didn't have to be so. A logical possibility was that the workers would hire the enterprise, not the enterprise hire the workers, but powerful reasons were against that, and so workers went to the factory to work, they had to work for fixed hours, and they had to subordinate themselves to the entrepreneur and his appointed agents, the management. To facilitate enterprise, society very cleverly invented the joint stock/limited liability company--one of mankind's more successful institutions in terms of its payoff, although obviously it has its drawbacks as well. Now the law of the company, as it developed around the middle of the 19th Century, showed little interest

in the worker. "Why should it?" the lawyers would have asked, as, in the spirit of laissez-faire, the enterprise as a trading agent was the thing, not the community of people that made it up. The relationship with workers was simply one in which the enterprise bought the labor (and with it the obedience) of workers as it required them; and when it was finished with them, it disposed of them--all perfectly straightforward. Of course, I've rather over-dramatized that development; even in the early 19th Century there's evidence of workers enforcing practices which the employer didn't like and so on. The cards weren't altogether stacked on the one side. But the point is that the way matters developed seen from the point of view of the work force wasn't exactly rosy, to say the least. From the point of view of the thinking worker--the man who thought, "Is this really necessary? What other ways are there of running society?"--there seemed to be two ways. Firstly, the workers could, through trade unions, seek to exact good wages, good conditions, and tolerable work from the employer--and that's how the practice of collective bargaining was developed. Alternatively, the workers could, through industrial organization and/or through a political labor movement, seek to alter the industrial system. Of course, these two possible avenues have never been mutually exclusive, but in the United States, broadly speaking, the first avenue only has been followed, although there have been some times, and one thinks of the Wobblies, when the idea of revolutionizing society enjoyed some popularity. In Europe the two lines of thought tended to be intertwined throughout industrial history. The first normally predominated, and again collective bargaining developed in that way and has become gradually more sophisticated. But in Europe the second line of approach has also been recurrent. There were the early ideas of Robert Owen in the 1830's; there were Marx, Engels, Bakunin; there was Georges Sorel and Syndicalism. Since then there were the workers' councils of World War I, and the ideas of guild socialism, particularly in Britain. And now there is the movement toward workers' partici-

pation, which I want to say quite a lot about. Workers' participation is not only a vogue subject, particularly in Europe, it's also, unfortunately, a very vague subject. I think I must introduce it by offering some clarification as to what it's all about. First I should examine the terms. What is a worker for this purpose? Well, he's anybody under a contract of employment who doesn't have appreciable executive authority. Participation I would like to define as any process whereby workers have a share in the reaching of managerial decisions in the enterprise. And management (for which there are so many definitions), I'd like to suggest is depersonalized as the process through which the aims of the enterprise and the means of attaining them are decided. I've talked about workers' participation in management. That means I would regard workers' participation in the ownership of industry, in the gain or profit of industry, as something rather separate. There is quite a bit of experimental evidence to suggest that there's not much of a correlation between participation in ownership and participation in management--that is, you can have full participation in ownership together with little participation in management, etc. If we were discussing participation in detail, we'd also have to look at a number of other factors. We'd have to say, "Participation in what kind of decision?" because that changes matters. Think of the kinds of decisions that are made in an enterprise--decisions about trading aspects, about money, about economics, about how production is going to be carried out. And there are decisions of a disciplinary nature--the enterprise viewed as a community, as a society--and decisions made about wages and working conditions. Then participation at what level? There are quite a lot of differences between decisions commonly made by the board of directors and the decisions which are made by the foreman in the everyday life of the shop. And participation in what technology? If you happen to be working in a small jobbing coppersmiths, then you can imagine what sort of decision you'll be participating in there. But it's very, very different if

you are talking about participation in a huge oil refinery. Lastly, I think you'd have to talk about the ends of participation. Do you favor participation on ideological grounds because you think that it is a worker's right, or are you going to argue about participation on functional grounds--because it serves society best, it helps industrial relations, or it helps efficiency if workers participate? And why has participation become an issue--and it certainly has--in a number of countries now as opposed to 20 or 50 or 100 years ago? This is the kind of phenomenon we discussed in our first session--that is, the changing attitudes of the workers and the reasons for those, and the changes taking place (technological, economic, organizational) in the nature of the industrial enterprise which, being to some extent in conflict with the well-being of workers, make people want to bridge that conflict by participation in decision-making. But it's still a far cry from saying why people are interested to asking the straightforward question, "Why should workers participate?" I remember a British newspaper to which some exasperated manager wrote saying, "What is all this rubbish about workers' participation? Why don't workers work and managers manage, and then we would all know where we are?" That is a rather unpopular view these days, but it shows the significance of examining why workers should participate.

There are generally three types of reasons put forth. The first one, which you will find, for instance, embodied in papal encyclicals (which are sometimes quite radical in this area) is the idea of morality--of personal development. Workers should participate because if they do then they are richer human beings. Not many people would argue against that, though it doesn't follow that the desire can be accomodated. Secondly, there is the argument that if we live in a political democracy, then we should also work in an industrial democracy. There is a great deal of soapbox oratory in very passionate terms about how "here I am a worker living in a free society, and once those monstrous factory

gates close behind me, I am a prisoner, I am organized from here to Kingdom Come, I have no freedom." Well, it sounds very emotional, but to me this is not a particularly strong argument. Certainly we want our industry to be as democratic as we can make it, but industry is not in the same position as a society which needs to be governed. Industry is not in business for the governance of men anymore than the governments of societies are usually in business for the production of goods or the provision of services. It's an arguable case, but I view it with some skepticism. The third argument is that workers should participate because it helps efficiency--because it's good for industrial relations--and there's a certain amount of experimental work which has a relation to this. It's not conclusive, but it seems that if the participation is well-designed, then the evidence points to it being at least helpful, if not very positively so. A fourth reason, which is the most important of the lot, is that workers should participate because they want to, and in some countries workers intend to participate more and have the muscle to achieve it.

I said workers want to participate, but even that is something which many people have questioned. My own reading of the evidence is that workers want to participate in two ways. Firstly, they want their own personal say in matters very close to their own jobs--the way work is distributed on the shop floor and that kind of thing. And secondly, although they don't want to participate in such decisions themselves, they want to feel that somebody is representing them in those grave decisions which are made about the closing of the enterprise, about a change of production, change of ownership--all those things which can be so vital to their lives. There they commonly feel that they don't have the expertise to deal with the matter themselves, but they want to feel that there is somebody in there rooting for them, looking out for their interests.

There's some evidence that the worker's interest in participation is also proportional to his degree of skill and responsibility. Thus it's been suggested

that the unskilled laborer really isn't very interested, and that as you move up to the semi-skilled man, skilled man, technician, white-collar worker, and the manager, more and more interest is found. One can add that after all workers have been told for 150 or 200 years that their job is to come into industry and do as they're told, not to think, and you don't change this sort of built-in belief lightly. But it is arguable that once workers get more experience of participation, then the desire for it will grow and its practice will grow, too. Nonetheless, in Europe the pressure for participation is not essentially a grass roots pressure. It's a political pressure and it's a pressure on the part of trade union leadership--not all trade unions and not all political parties but a considerable number. There's just one major exception. Communist trade union movements tend to be strongly against participation because that is correcting the working of the capitalist system rather than destroying it. Indeed, many of them would say that talk of participation is a capitalist plot to seduce the worker from his proper goal of the downfall of capitalist society.

Well, if greater participation is sought, then how should it operate? I group the possible means under five headings. Firstly, participation through the board of the company or at that level. Secondly, participation through some form of works committee, (works council, joint consultation). Thirdly, which might surprise you a little, through collective bargaining--we'll return to that. Then through participative management, and finally, participation in the task. I'll comment on all of these because in several of them there are quite startling developments in Western Europe.

Firstly, let's deal with the changes taking place in the form of the enterprise and its top decision-making structure. People in Europe have started to ask themselves in the last ten years particularly what is sacred about the limited liability/joint stock company of the mid-19th Century, and they've come up with the answer that there is nothing sacred about it. There's nothing

to say that the kind of industrial unit which was then developed is the viable, overwhelmingly preponderate unit which has to serve our industrial societies in the last quarter of the 20th Century. When company law was adopted in the 19th Century, it took different forms in Europe. Thus, the Swedish company has a single board of directors, all of whom are part-time except perhaps for the managing director, who is likely to be a board member. Britain on the other hand adopted a very loose, flexible form with an undefined mixture of full- and part-time directors, and indeed, in practice, the core of the British board is commonly a group of full-time executives. But Germany, at a somewhat later stage of industrial development than Britain, developed a rather different idea--the idea of a two-tiered board structure, and this is rather important in the consideration of recent European developments in participation. In a two-tiered board structure, there is basically a management board, which handles the day-to-day running of the enterprise, and a supervisory board (which meets perhaps every quarter), that oversees the broad conduct of the enterprise and appoints the management board; it is usually provided that a member of one board cannot be a member of the other. So you have two distinct functions, and the original intention of the supervisory board was that it should be a watchdog for the shareholders; this was particularly apt in Germany, where there is a great deal of institutional share-holding, as opposed to more wide-spread individual investments in the United States and in Britain. In 1951-52, some very important developments took place in Germany. There's an interesting historical background. The occupying forces were anxious to do anything they could to support and strengthen democratic forces, forces which were likely to militate against any resurgence of fascism. These were notably, of course, the trade unions, which, crushed by Hitler, had an impeccable record in immediate post-war Germany. The unions decided to strive for a say in the boards of industries, and in an act of 1951--an act known as the Montansgesetz--they achieved it for the coal,

iron, and steel industries. The firms in these industries were to have a two-tiered board structure, and half of the members of the supervisory board were to be trade union or worker nominees. The management board was to comprise a commercial director, a technical director, and a labor director, and the labor director was to be what was virtually a nominee of the trade union. Remember that in Germany they have industrial unions, so it's very rare for a company to have more than one union with representation.

That's now been in operation for well over twenty years and you might well ask what has it shown? Nobody's going to argue that German coal lines are inefficient. They have done just as well as coal mines in any similar European country, and they've done better than some. But the experts seem to agree that equally there's no reason to suggest that the "mitbestimmung" (co-determination), as it has been called, practiced in that industry has been the secret of its modest success. The same applies to steel. It's simply something that is unproven. Success or not, so far as the unions were concerned (and they've been very influential in Germany in the last 25 years), they wanted more, and in 1952 they sought to extend the co-determination principle to the rest of German industry. In this they failed. The political tide had turned, and the most they could achieve was a fairly broad application in the industry for a different, less full, arrangement, whereby workers or unions had representatives or supervisory boards up to one-third of the membership. The first member had to be a manual worker, the second member had to be a white-collar worker, both employed by the firm, and the third and subsequent members brought in outside nominees.

Ever since 1951 the German unions have sought to extend the principle of co-determination, but they have not until recently met with any great success. Now, with a Social Democrat majority in the coalition govenmment, and with a Free Democrat minority partner, a bargain has been struck as to the future for

participation of this kind in German industry outside coal, iron, and steel. The proposal doesn't apply across industry but only to companies employing at least 2,000 people, of which there are about 650 in Germany, and it is provided that the supervisory board in such companies should number up to twenty people of whom only half (as opposed to two-thirds as it is at the moment) should be share-holder nominees. Of the other half there should be blue-collar worker representation, white-collar worker representation, and trade union representation, and--there we come to the really critical element--there should be a senior employee, a man who has been defined by law as a man responsible for part of the enterprise but not for the whole enterprise. In other words, it cannot be the managing director, it cannot be the president of the company. And he has to be elected by the managers and supervisors. Now this has proved to be the critical point in this proposal. The employers are not particularly pleased about the whole business; it goes too far for their liking. But it's not particularly popular with the trade unions either; the unions see it as a means whereby employer dominance is preserved because the tenth man in the union team--the senior employee--they see as likely to vote with the employers. What will happen in the next few months I don't know, but it is planned that the changes I have outlined should go into opeartion on January 1st, 1975.

With participation goes another scheme against which the employers' outcry has been equally strong, a scheme for a profit sharing throughout German industry, or at least through 27,000 major companies. Under this scheme those companies with profits of more than something like $170,000 would have to pay out up to 10 percent of their net annual profits in shares or cash; the resulting amounts to be administered by kinds of investment trust on behalf of the employees. It is envisaged that this would reach something like two billion dollars a year, although each employee would not get much more than one hundred dollars a year out of it. But the reason the employers are so much against this scheme is that

they see it, coupled with the co-determination proposals, as facilitating employee and trade union takeover because the trusts would be able to buy their way into companies. So not only would the workers' nominees to the board be workers' representatives, but some of the shareholders' representatives might represent the workers' trusts, with all that means in terms of control. [Later note: it now seems that this profit sharing scheme will not be proceeded with for the time being.]

I don't propose to say a great deal more about participation in ownership or gain, but I wanted to talk at least about that German proposal because of its topicality and because of its association with the co-determination proposal. I'd also like to mention, so that you'll see clearly that this isn't confined to one country, the Danish proposals for economic democracy, as it's called in Denmark. This reached the stage of a bill before the Danish Parliament in January, 1973. It was a controversial proposal and it was not adopted. In the end it was deferred for twelve months, whereafter the Danish Social Democratic Party fell from government, and so we have probably seen the last of this measure for the near future, though I do not doubt something of the sort will recur. The economic democracy proposal provided that every employer--public or private--would set aside a half percent of his wage bill at the end of the year. If he were a joint stock company, he would pay at least two-thirds of that in shares of the company. If it was a government office, the money would be set aside to buy shares in industry; these shareholdings would be registered in the name of individual workers, but would be administered with all their voting rights by a board comprising 36 trade union representatives and 24 government representatives (with no employer representatives). It doesn't need much calculation to find that within something like ten to fifteen years this fund would virtually control Danish industry. By American standards some of these ideas are pretty radical, but they are to be encountered in several countries in Europe, where they're

much discussed, as ways in which industry can take a new late-20th Century form, and the worker can have a place in that industry, which will mean that we really are all in one society and are not living in a society divided between capitalists and workers.

Worker Directors

Not only is there a general move in western Europe toward the two-tiered board structure, but it is commonly being provided that there shall be worker representation on at least the supervisory board of these companies. In Norway, just to show you that there are differences between countries, there is a recent law which doesn't exactly set up a supervisory board but a corporate assembly, with one-third worker members, accompanied by the possibility of worker appointments to the management board. The Dutch have brought in a two-tiered structure with a difference. There is no employee director on the supervisory board as such in the Netherlands, but the law provides that the members of the board are co-opted on the nomination of either the works' council or the shareholders' general meeting, either of those two groups equally having the power to veto nominations to the board. So, in effect, you are creating a board structure--and this is where the Dutch feel they've been very clever--in which workers will feel "This is our board; it's the shareholders' board as well, but it's also our board, the workers' board. It's an institution which rules the company by agreement of all concerned."

Probably the most significant move has come from the European Economic Community Commission--the executive body of the Common Market. As long ago as 1970 it introduced what is called the proposed statute for the European Company, and it followed that up in September 1972 with a proposal for a Fifth Directive on the Structure of Companies. These two proposals have their rationale under different parts of the Rome Treaty. The origin of the European Company Statute

was the idea that efficiency would be stimulated if instead of having a German company and a French company, with all sorts of monstrously complicated provisions to fulfill, entrepreneurs simply established a European company which could operate freely in any country of the six (as it was then and nine as it is now) and would only have to follow one legal system. Well, that bogged down very early on this very question of worker representation. The German trade unions, backed by the German government, weren't going to support anything which didn't have worker representation on the supervisory board because if so, I'm sure they feared that many German employers would hastily set up a works beyond the German border to rid themselves of worker representation. Conversely, some other countries said that they didn't think the time was right; that wasn't the way things were done in their countries. That, I suspect, would be the American view if this country were a member of the European community--not out of any rooted objection to worker participation but simply because taken in total the American system works differently. I'll return to that.

The draft Fifth Directive, on the other hand, which also adopts the two-tiered board notion, came much later and was developed under the proposals aimed at harmonizing company law throughout the nine members of the community. Again worker representation on the supervisory board was proposed, but this time the wording was a little more flexible, to permit the Dutch variant as well as the German variant of worker representation, and indeed there's an assumption that that clause might be made wider still to accommodate other nations.

So far the European Company and the Fifth Directive exist only on paper. The decision-making body in the community on matters of importance is the Council of Ministers (representatives of the governments of the nine members), and the Council of Ministers has not yet given its approval to these proposals.

What the whole picture adds up to is that in Western Europe generally, there is a move to a two-tiered board structure with worker representation on the

supervisory board of the two boards. Worker directors have also been legislated for in Sweden and Denmark, where the board remains single-tier.

Well, what about this form of worker representation? It's a rather critical point. To take the most naive view of participation, having a worker on the board--the place where decisions are made--is surely the very essence of worker participation. Of course, a lot depends on whether you're talking about a supervisory board or a management board--whether you're talking about a worker representative (a man who works in the firm and sits on the board) or a workers' representative (someone who is nominated from outside to represent workers' interests), and it depends on the balance--the numerical and power balance--between worker directors or workers' directors and shareholders' directors. But even putting all those complications on one side and examining the basic idea of the worker on the board, it's worth looking at the pros and the cons. As for the pros, there's one huge one: the worker's voice is heard where the vital decisions are taken, if there is a worker in the board. Secondly, it can be argued that the decisions made by the board are better decisions because they're decisions that the work force is prepared to live with and the board had the advantage of good advice from workers. Thirdly, it's argued that the practice would reduce strife. If the important questions are thrashed out by worker and management within the board, that's a lot better than letting the board make bad decisions and then slog it out with the work force and the trade unions in a strike. Fourthly, it's argued that a worker on the board demonstrates that everybody has a stake in the enterprise.

But if the pros are persuasive, the cons seem to be at least equally persuasive. Firstly, there's a problem of the duality of the worker representative's role--the role conflict. To take it at its most absurd, how can the worker sit at one side of the table and present a major wage claim and then run around and answer himself from the other side of the table? Of course, it doesn't in

practice come to that, and indeed in the new Swedish law, which has legislated for worker representatives on a single tier board, it is provided that the workers' representatives should not sit when questions of wages and working conditions are being discussed. So there are ways around that. Nonetheless there is a certain uncomfortable duality, and with that duality there's another snag. If the workers' representative on the board goes on being a board member for a great many years, then it's arguable that having acquired a deep understanding of management views and problems he is no longer really a workers' representative. In Germany it's a commonly heard argument that by the time the labor director in the coal, iron, steel industries has had twenty years as a labor director, with all the experience of years of managing (and having the appurtenances of office), it can hardly be said that he is truly representative.

Question: Are these positions usually paid positions, and does a person cease to be a worker once he starts serving on the board?

Answer: This varies. Under the German legislation of which I spoke, I said that there are supervisory board members and there are management board members. In both cases the office would be paid, but in the case of the management board member, he would be a full-time executive of the company, although virtually a nominee of the trade union. The supervisory board member, beyond the first two who have to be employees, would probably be drawn from outside: Trade union officials, academics, and so on. Some schemes, like the participation scheme in the nationalized British Steel Company, provide for workers to be at their traditional posts when they are not serving on the board.

Continuing with these "cons" of the worker on the board, there's the "representative fallacy," as I call it. When you have someone on a body in a representative capacity, it is dangerous to presume that his constituents will necessarily think as he does. Next, I think there's a very strong argument that the board should be the one place in the company with single-minded

interests--the optimization of the resources of the company. The board members should be the best people who can possibly be recruited to that end, as opposed to the idea that board directors should sit in a representative capacity, representing their partisan interests. And if you are going to have interest representation on the board, then where are you going to stop? Workers are important, yes, but what about the community, what about the customer, what about the supplier?

Well, most people in western Europe have a lot of doubts aoout the worker on the board as a means of participation, but this has not prevented a great mass of legislation coming on the books in a number of countries in the last five years or so providing for just that. However, let us pass on to a second form of worker participation.

Works Councils

If you had asked anybody in the 1940's about worker participation in western societies, they would have said, "Yes, this is through joint consultation." The United States had its labor representation plans and its production committees for instance and Britain was famous for its joint consultative committees. But I ask you to put those notions out of your mind when you are thinking about the present form of works council in Europe. The works councils are different in virtually every country--and they are obligatory by law or by national agreement in every western European country except for Britain and the Irish Republic. They are elected bodies of workers (sometimes with management membership) who are charged with rights to information, rights to consultation, and, in some cases, with decision-making rights, or at least co-decision-making rights. They haven't, in their formative period, which mostly runs from the end of World War II on, been a remarkable success. You won't find many enthusiasts for the works council, but you will find that their powers are continually being strengthened. Why?

Because they are seen as a device for participation, a device for making the management accountable to the work force. They're not necessarily trade union bodies, although in practice they usually are. In the interesting German case the works councils are required by legislation to further the interests of the enterprise and to help to maintain industrial peace. It is contrary to German law for works councils to participate in a strike. German works councils are fairly well known. I might, however, illustrate by reference to the Netherlands where, as in Germany, there is a new, but less well known, works council law. The Dutch works council, apart from having the nominating and blocking facilities I mentioned, has very wide rights indeed to require information concerning financial and production matters from the employer. It has the right to tender advice on matters such as the control of the company, transfer of production, cutbacks in production, pay scales, training and personnel policies, and so on, and has co-determination rights on pensions, the arrangement of working hours and holidays, and safety. If the management and the works council don't agree, then the decision goes outside the company to a body called the trade commission. If the works council thinks the firm is badly run, it can ask that an outside agency investigate the firm. This is rather like bringing in liquidators, though, it is hoped, not so pessimistic. So the works councils are really quite important.

If time permitted, I could describe to you the Yugoslav workers' councils, which are the dominant bodies in the Yugoslav enterprise, but we're mostly discussing the West European countries here and time does not permit. So we will turn to collective bargaining.

Collective Bargaining

To think of collective bargaining as a form of participation surprises some people, though it shouldn't, because clearly collective bargaining is a

way in which workers, through representatives, have a say in decisions which concern them. Indeed, I would say that collective bargaining is the form of worker participation in the United States of America, and perfectly appropriately so. It seems to fit the local scene; industry flourishes under it and it satisfies the workers; what more could you ask of it? In Europe collective bargaining is an ancillary form of participation, of greater or lesser importance according to country. But the following can be said about developments in collective bargaining in Europe. On the whole the subject matter of collective bargaining is extending; the unions and employers are tending to discuss an ever widening variety of subjects. The vertical cover of collective bargaining is extending. Increasingly it is tending to cover management, supervisory staff, and white collar workers, so their participation is extending through collective bargaining. A number of European unions are making attacks on managerial prerogatives, again effectively a form of increasing participation. Lastly, collective bargaining, which in Europe has very widely been at a national or regional level for an industry, is moving toward more bargaining at the workplace, which is again clearly more participative.

About participative management and participation in the task, I need say little because we went into this last time. Suffice it to say that there is of course a great deal of American interest and experience in developing participative styles for management, but don't make any mistake: these are managerially-induced arrangements, they are not normally collectively bargained and in Europe would not of themselves satisfy demands for participation. European management styles are, however, tending to become more participative,

Well, to sum up at this point. I hope that in talking about participation, I have shown you that there is a great deal happening. I could have extended my remarks a great deal; in addition to Yugslovia, I could have talked about Israel, Tanzania, India, Peru, and so on. But I want to add one qualification

to the significance of these developments of which I have been speaking. I have painted a picture which you may have found very radical. But what is written is not necessarily what actually happens in practice. To give you an example which helps my explanation: as long ago as the 1960's, French law provided that the works council should have rights to information, could indeed engage an auditor at the company's expense to interpret the books of the company, and had the right to be represented by a manual worker and an office worker at board meetings. What happens in practice? Well, very little (though the law is now being strengthened). What happens in practice in all these cases may be other than was intended, and I wouldn't like you to think that what I have been telling you about have been changes which are turning upside down the actual day to day conduct of European industry. What I can say is that these innovations and proposals add up to quite a lot in a meaningful way, and more will be seen of them in the future. As for the direction, I do not forsee any one, direct road for more participation; rather I see a movement along all of the avenues which I sketched out. At its best, I think this is going to make a new and widely-acceptable shape for our advanced industrial societies. At its worst, if important managerial decisions get hamstrung by internal argument, it will have a very slowing effect on economic performance, to say the least.

Finally, to sum up generally; three sessions have only permitted a very partial look at the worker and work. If we had been examining the subject fully, we should have needed a great deal more time, but I hope I have at least whetted your appetite to inquire more deeply into some of the things we've talked about. What I've tried to show is how a variety of technological, organizational, economic, and social forces are at work which will change the shape of work in our advanced industrial societies, and in a related way, how workers' attitudes and social attitudes are changing--not as radically as some people have suggested, but nonetheless quite significantly, in ways to which responses

will have to be made in our societies. The interplay of all these forces seems likely to result in moves to improve the quality of working life--to humanize work--and I think part of this shift will take the forms of greater individual flexibility at work, changed forms of work organization, and a greater say for workers in a variety of managerial decisions. If the likely changes are approached in a doctrinaire way, I think the result might be a kind of stiffness which will have a braking effect on efficiency. If they are applied in a functional way, and if they're introduced in agreed ways, then I think they may be very successful in promoting social cohesion without adverse, or without appreciable adverse, economic effects. I don't think there's any need to be afraid of these developments, although they clearly attack some deeply held ideological beliefs on all sides. I'm sure we shall fare best if we're prepared to experiment and to welcome change, something which has always been the hallmark of this great country. To say the least, the future developments are certainly likely to be interesting.

Question: What is your analysis of the shop stewards' movement in Britain in terms of participation and collective bargaining?

Answer: To understand that I think we have to take a quick look at the development of this movement because it's very interesting from an industrial relations point of view. There were so-called stewards in the workshops of the 1890's and their duties were to make sure the men were paid-up union members and that district rules were followed. In World War I something very significant happened in 1915. The British government sat down with the trade unions for almost the first time that any government in an advanced country had treated with the trade unions on such terms and worked out a deal to reduce restrictive practices in exchange for promises related to the future. The unions agreed to allow women to work on men's jobs and so on. Well, that was all very well for the top union leadership, but the men on the shop floor took a rather different

view: they said if we can't rely on the leaders (and indeed some of the leaders were howled down when they came to speak at meetings), we will look after ourselves, and their instrument in looking after themselves was the shop steward. That beginning is rather well described in a book by a Yugoslav named Branko Pribicevic called The Shop Stewards' Movement and Workers' Control, (Blackwell, Oxford). The militant rank and file movement then developed a theory about how the workers could take over industry using works committees as the medium, and in Germany, in the Soviet Union, in several other parts of Europe, around 1918 the works committees--workers' soviets--and the Communist Party committees operated very closely together. In other words they had a very radical tinge, to say the least. In Britain the shop stewards' movement virtually fell to bits in the 1920's because of the economic situation, and employers were not slow to get rid of active shop stewards when they had the opportunity. Then with the revival of industry the shop stewards' role increased again, and the shop steward in British industry has not only become a collective bargainer (incidentally, in many British industries no distinction is made between collective bargaining and grievance procedures), but he is also the voice of worker control over everyday operations, and that in some ways is the more telling of his roles. What it means is that the employer says, "Well, I'd like to buy a machine to do this particuaar job," and then the shop steward says, "Oh, no you don't unless my members get what they want out of it." So this is a very full form of worker participation. Whether it is a form of worker participation that is desirable in the long-term interest of the community as a whole is a much more debatable point.

Question: How flexible is flexi-time? What would the typical hours be?

Answer: They're just what you care to make them. For an office which works from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., it could be that the overall time might be 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and that the core time would be 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

or 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. I didn't say how this has been working. The fact is that although a few people have had bad experiences, on the whole it's really proven remarkably successful.

Question: You talk about the development of workers' participation. You talked of Germany after the war when the occupation forces were looking to discourage the regrowth of facism. They obviously helped bring about worker participation. What did the unions do? Were there strikes? And in other countries were there work actions on the part of the unions at all?

Answer: To take the German case, strike action was threatened by the unions, but in the end, if my memory serves, they did not have to take it. Although they threatened on the ground that the public was more likely to appreciate their position if they saw that a big stick was being wielded, the thing was virtually decided by political pressure rather than industrial action. As to developments in other countries, all the participative developments I've spoken about seem to have come about through discussion, sometimes between employers and unions directly, but to a large extent by both of the parties in consultation with government or by government on behalf of the unions and probably opposed to some extent by the employers. That's about how it's worked out.

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